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FAITH AND MORALS

I.—FAITH
AS RITSCHL DEFINED IT

II.—THE MORAL LAW
AS UNDERSTOOD IN ROMANISM AND PROTESTANTISM

By WILHELM HERRMANN, D.D.
PROFESSOR OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MARBURG

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY
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AND
ROBERT W. STEWART, M.A., B.Sc.

SECOND EDITION

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Note to Second Edition

EXCEPT for a few minor corrections, this edition differs from the first only in the Appendix to the Second Part; instead of appearing in full, that section is now presented in a brief summary (by Mr Stewart).

Biographical Note

WILHELM HERRMANN was born at Melkow, near Schönhausen on the Elbe, on December 6, 1846. His father was a country minister, of whom his son says that "he understood Schleiermacher's theology well, and the religious life of peasant people still better." His son received his preliminary education at the Gymnasium, or classical high school, in Stendal, and in the autumn of 1866 proceeded to the University of Halle, where he studied for four years. During three of them he had the good fortune to live as amanuensis with old Professor Tholuck, a teacher who forms a link between Dr Herrmann and many of our own older theologians. The friendship thus begun with Tholuck lasted until his death some ten years later.

On the outbreak of the Franco-German War the young theological student entered the 26th Infantry, and served through the campaign. Returning from active service, he passed his theological examination at Halle, and then, in German fashion, went as tutor for two years to a family living near Magdeburg. In 1874 he came back to Halle, and made successful application for recognition as Privat-Docent, presenting as his thesis an essay on "*Gregorii Nysseni sententiae de salute adipiscenda.*"[1] Soon afterwards he met Ritschl for the first time at Tholuck's house, being, however, already acquainted with his writings, and, indeed, prepared to attach himself, in a general way, to the view of theology there maintained. The acquaintance thus formed ripened quickly into a close friendship; and Ritschl, in writing a few months later about his visit to Halle, speaks of his pleasurable intercourse with young

[1] *The Views of Gregory of Nyssa regarding the obtaining of Salvation.*

Herrmann. It is interesting to note that about a year later Ritschl first came in contact with another famous adherent of his school, Adolf Harnack. Among Herrmann's first public duties was the conduct of the religious instruction in the Gymnasium at Halle, and here he introduced a primer of Ritschl's, which, however, despite the active interest of the author and the zeal of the teacher, was not a distinct success. The matter brought teacher and author together, all the same, and Dr Herrmann reckons his intercourse with Ritschl at this period, both in person and by letter, as having, along with his early home-life and his time with Tholuck, had the most powerful influence on his development.

Ritschl's opponents soon found that they were no longer confronted by a single man, but by a group; and in the discussion occasioned by the appearance of Ritschl's great work *Justification and Reconciliation*, Herrmann, by reviews and articles in the

Theologische Literaturzeitung and the *Christliche Welt*, fought hard on Ritschl's side.

Dr Herrmann has himself given a general review of the aims he has set before himself in his literary activity. His chief concern has been to show that the Christian faith is rightly understood as trust in the power of Personal Life which reveals itself and lets itself be felt in the world. In the second place, he has maintained that this faith is independent of all scientific knowledge, and finally he has laboured to show the nature of the connection between religious faith and morality. His first book, *Metaphysics and Theology* (1876),[1] dealt with the second of these points, namely, the independent character of faith; and the same subject was treated more fully three years later in the more important work *Religion in its Relation to Science and Morality*.[2] The problem is there worked out

[1] *Metaphysik und Theologie.*

[2] *Die Religion im Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit.*

in dependence on the Kantian theory of knowledge, and in this book Herrmann was the first to use the expression 'value-judgment,' which has played such a large part in discussions on 'Ritschlianism.' The book was commended by Ritschl as "the doctrine of method appropriate to his system." The right understanding of the Christian faith is the subject of a series of pamphlets, namely, *The Significance of the Doctrine of Inspiration for the Protestant Church*,[1] *Why does our Faith require Historic Facts?*[2] *The Notion of Revelation*,[3] *Certainty in Faith and Freedom in Theology*,[4] *The Protestant Faith and the Theology of Albrecht Ritschl*,[5] *What is the Point at Issue in the Controversy regarding the Apostles' Creed?*[6] and to the same theme

[1] *Die Bedeutung der Inspirationslehre für die evang. Kirche.*

[2] *Warum bedarf unser Glaube geschichtliche Thatsachen?*

[3] *Der Begriff der Offenbarung.*

[4] *Die Gewissheit des Glaubens und die Freiheit der Theologie.*

[5] *Der evang. Glaube und die Theologie Albrecht Ritschls.*

[6] *Worum handelt es sich in dem Streit um das Apostolicum?*

is dedicated what may be said to be Dr Herrmann's greatest work, the only one that has yet appeared in English, *The Communion of the Christian with God*, 1884.[1] A Scottish critic has said of this last that while "provokingly devoid of order or method it gives a more vivid impression than any other Ritschlian production of the real religious interest animating most of the adherents of that school." Ritschl himself wrote to its author: "I would call it a devotional book were it not also directed 'ad destruenda praejudicia theologica.' Your words are like still drops of water falling one after another on one spot and able to wear a hole even through stone." Dr Herrmann has since turned his energies to the more vigorous exposition of the fundamental ideas of morality in their historical development. This is the subject of his *Sketch of Ethics*, 1901,[2] a short but important book which seems doomed to remain

[1] *Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott.*
[2] *Ethik*, Mohr's *Grundriss* series.

untranslated, and two pamphlets, *Roman Catholic and Protestant Morality*,[1] and *The Instructions of Jesus in regard to Morality: their Use and Abuse* (1903).[2]

Professor Herrmann was called to Marburg as teacher of Systematic Theology in the year that saw the publication of *Religion in its Relation to Science and Morality*. In 1888 he married the daughter of one of his colleagues, J. Bergmann, professor of philosophy. We saw that when a student he remained during his whole course at Halle, not, as is perhaps more usual, dividing his time between several universities. And similarly, as professor he has remained for twenty-four years at Marburg, refusing calls to Heidelberg in 1887, Halle in 1897, and this year to Göttingen. In Marburg, any day during the semester, he may be seen strolling up to his lecture-room, or, in company with one or two students,

[1] *Römische und evangelische Sittlichkeit.*

[2] *Die sittliche Weisungen Jesu; ihr richtiger und ihr falscher Gebrauch.*

native or foreign, combining the pleasures of a country walk with theological instruction or controversy. On such excursions Dr Herrmann gives every encouragement to the presentation of difficulties or of objections to his own teaching, and is himself untiring in sympathetic and earnest reply. There may be those who will forget much of what they heard in the class-room who can never forget pausing in some forest glade where the sunlight flickered through the beeches, and listening while, to use Herrmann's own words regarding another, "sharply and exactly he spoke of what moved his heart."

R. W. S.

FAITH

As Ritschl defined it

Introduction by the Translator

This address, originally delivered in October 1890, only a few months after Ritschl's death, has here and there the tone of an oration on the departed master and friend. Professor Herrmann sees in Ritschl the champion of simplicity and honesty against a prevailing professionalism and formalism; and he holds that Ritschl's battle-cry was just Luther's. Faith, according to both, is not belief in any Church or in any doctrine; it is neither assent to the truth of the narratives of Scripture, nor is it acceptance of propositions in theology. It is a spiritual experience of an overpowering revelation of God, and this revelation comes to man through the circumstances in which he realises, in his own life, contact with the inner life of Jesus Christ.

In Professor Herrmann's view Faith begins with a guess after a power behind Nature,—a guess resting on various grounds but always involving some moral results. But these moral results lead to little that is satisfactory, till in Jesus Christ's life and teaching we find that the moral requirements after which we have striven have been recognised and fulfilled; and so we know that the power we guessed at is beneficent and has been at work here in Christ's life coming into touch with us. Through Christ accordingly we come to be sure of God.

Professor Herrmann maintains that, while Luther rightly and clearly stated this true notion of what faith is, it did not thoroughly penetrate the churches of the Reformation, and has not completely prevailed even yet. Our present difficulties in connection with sacerdotalism and with the candid acceptance of the results of critical investigation into Biblical literature are due, he would say, to the fact that the Roman Catholic notion of faith still

lingers among us, to our intellectual and religious confusion. The urgent theological task of to-day is to establish among the people Luther's clear comprehension of what Christian faith really is.

There also enters one other line of thought. It is necessary to make a clear distinction between Theology, where facts are matters of personal conviction, and Natural Science, in which facts are recognised and established by coldly impersonal proof.

It is hoped that the headings which have been inserted over each paragraph by the translators may be a guide to the course of the argument in detail. One or two notes have been added within square brackets.

R. W. S.

Wimbledon, *December* 1903.

FAITH

As Ritschl defined it[1]

Theology is not a pure science; it must be dogmatic.

The patrons and members of the University expect of their Rector that his first official act should be to communicate something which may prove his own right and that of his Faculty to be recognised as part of the University. This task seems to be more difficult for us theologians than for the professors of other Faculties; at least a glance at the theological rectorial addresses of the last ten years makes one suspect so. Not seldom the discourse has been occupied with the proof that

[1 The German title is *Der evangelische Glaube und die Theologie Albrecht Ritschls.*]

theology is a science. Now, if this particularly needs to be proved, there must be grounds which make it doubtful. The chief of these is this. A theological faculty cannot entrust the representation of its historical branches to the linguist or historian versed in the history of Christianity. We always want something more from such a scholar, something in the giving of which he becomes himself a theologian. From the theologian we expect not only that he should know the history of the Christian Church, but also that he should make the Church's interest his own. In his own special way he has to make the same endeavour that the Church has to make in her united life, namely, that Christianity shall appear as something living and present. We theologians fulfil this Christian duty when we defend in our scientific work the convictions of the Christian faith. It is naturally presupposed that in doing this we ourselves are convinced of the truth of the Christian faith. Yet this conviction, without which theological

work is impossible, constitutes the special object of inquiry in the course of study which it is my task to represent in this University. In Systematic Theology, in Dogmatic and Ethic, the ideas of the Christian faith have to be expounded in their inner connection, and traced back to their source. In this process it ought at the same time to be made clear how Christian faith justifies to itself the truth of what it believes. The individual holders of the various theological chairs are in every case only theologians in so far as they are in some sense dogmatists.

Theology is censured on this account.

Now this is just what is said to divide theology from all other science. What sort of a science is it that lets itself be circumscribed by unalterable, rigidly-held convictions? To be worthy of the respect of science, must we not make these convictions themselves our problem? Instead, however, of pursuing the course of free inquiry into reality, do we not

in point of fact stand before our object with bound hands? Instead of having the dutiful objectivity with which the man of science simply bows before the facts he perceives, are we not ruled by preconceptions in the shape of unassailable judgments regarding all that is, or can be, true in that sphere? Nay, more! The Christian religion stands or falls by the reality and power of certain facts which we say we find present in history. A Christian theologian is unable to put these facts in question. Then he can hardly count himself among historical inquirers; for if a matter is fairly ancient a true historical inquirer is ready to say that every fact becomes a question. In short, where Dogmatic Theology reigns free inquiry ceases.

But we ourselves assert the difference between personal conviction and scientific proof.

So runs the accusation. We do not fear it, for we defy it. We admit that it is quite true. We do not stand free before the object of our

study, but are desirous of being determined by it in our most inward thoughts. Thus we would be surrendering our very selves if we were willing to allow that the conception of our object were as boundlessly changeable as are the scientific conceptions of things. If the character of science is on this account denied to theology, we must just be content. We know quite well that we do not belong to the circle of science which, apart from any influence of personal conviction, perceives the reality that can be demonstrated. We can well comfort ourselves by the reflection that we are not thus forced out of that circle by others, but step outside of our own will, because we are, perhaps in a higher degree than any others, forced to consider the question of what Science is, and because we have a knowledge of Faith.

When we speak of faith our thoughts turn to Albrecht Ritschl.

But if we thus cut ourselves off from science, in that sense, we do not by so doing

cut ourselves off from those scientific students who have another vindication of existence alongside of science. Perhaps if we observe the friendly relations to men of science which we enjoy to so great a degree here in Marburg, that may show us the way to give to theology itself another relation to science than that which seems to result from the remarks we have just made. But first, that we may arrive at a common understanding, we will speak of that upon which the distinction is grounded, namely, of faith in the Christian sense; and I enter this subject the more readily that it compels me to think of one to whom the Christian Church owes her deepest thanks, the great theologian Albrecht Ritschl, who died last March. Many of us can remember his vigorous, manly personality. All know at least his name. The religious and political press has seen to that. In the last decade of Ritschl's life we are presented with a spectacle the like of which the history of the evangelical Church has never before furnished.

A scholar, holding himself entirely aloof from ecclesiastical party strife, draws upon himself the equal hatred of the two parties which otherwise fight as irreconcilable enemies. An author whose writings occasionally present considerable difficulties even to his brother theologians, is made a subject on which to exercise their critical powers by writers for whom it is evidently no easy matter to keep command of a fairly long train of thought. A man who in the evening of his days drew into his circle a small number of academic theologians, is pointed out by influential leaders of numerous theological groups as a monstrous peril for the Church. The polemic against him and his school was so carried on that it seemed in fact as if real anxiety had robbed his adversaries of the power of reasonable reflection. It is a method hardly found anywhere else, to put forward a sentence which has been produced for the purpose as a quotation from the opponent, and then to use this invented

quotation to fix the severest blame on him. Yet in the dispute with Ritschl and his school this has been the most usual form of polemic. So it was just last August in the large assembly held under the auspices of the Brandenburg Church Council. Ritschl never defended himself in this struggle. He did his work, and for the rest was silent.

The ground of the hostility to Ritschl was his unsparing exposure of professionalism.

There must be something in Ritschl and his work to explain the passionate attacks on him. It cannot be for no reason that men who otherwise have some regard to their love of truth, are in the controversy with him constrained to say the reverse of truth so openly. Such a widespread movement is not to be explained by personal antipathy. Is it the case that the ministers who have passed through his school have roused opposition by bringing confusion into their congregations and causing trouble to their ecclesiastical

superiors? Nay; the very opposite has been repeatedly testified by the Council of the Church in which Ritschl worked. According to this evidence Ritschl's pupils have rather been distinguished in the pastoral office by waiting quietly and faithfully on their glorious ministry, not moved by the perilous impulse to put themselves forward in the noise of party assemblies. The reason lies in something else, which, for those who knew him more closely, found strong expression in Ritschl's personal bearing. He observed in religious intercourse an extraordinary strictness with himself. That he lived in the world of ideas contained in the Christian faith, certainly made itself so strongly felt in his conversation that a less powerful intellect was apt to become tired with it. In his house and here in Marburg I have been with him for days on end without his once breaking, by a lighter conversation of any length, his preoccupation with higher things. One saw in this how deeply these matters had taken

hold of him. But seldom did he utter a weak or sentimental word. Sharply and exactly he spoke of what moved his heart. In his case this is to be explained not only from the fact that the more easily strong-willed and truth-loving men become sentimental, the more careful are they to keep watch over the tendency to express their emotion. Ritschl would rather protest against a conduct which seemed to him to be all too prevalent in the evangelical Church of our day. There are people endowed with a wonderful facility in religious intercourse. Towards the gift of such people Ritschl was in the highest degree susceptible. The picture of one of the most powerful of these richly-talented persons[1] he had daily before his eyes in his study. He lived in the idea that the pure expression of religious emotion and its

[1] Gerhard Tersteegen (1697–1769), a hymn-writer of the school of Neander, a leader in revivals, a mystic and ascetic; he had a powerful influence in and around Mülheim. One of his hymns is familiar to us in J. Wesley's translation, which begins, "Thou hidden love of God, whose height."]

life-kindling activity is the weightiest thing that can come into existence in the world, and forms the proper distinguishing mark in history. All the more painful did he feel it when religious talk, which ventured to touch what is highest, struck him as artificial. He treated the professionals in this sphere as his deadly enemies. They have paid him back richly in kind.

Ritschl saw that the root of the evil was a false idea of faith.

Ritschl not only treated this evil habit in individual instances as a profanation of the holiest, but he aimed also at getting at its cause and rooting it out altogether. The root of religious affectation and, in general, of all manufactured Christianity is the false idea of faith, which Ritschl confronted with Luther's weapons. And this idea of faith is not only fostered by despisers of Christianity as their ground for turning from it, but also prevails in wide circles of the Church, including her theologians.

It is a common idea that faith is an acknowledgment of the whole Bible as God's Word and true; coupled with a firm trust in its narratives and doctrines.

From thousands who call themselves Protestant Christians one may hear this answer to the question, "What is faith?" "Faith consists of two parts, acknowledgment that all that we read in the Bible is God's Word and therefore true; and at the same time a firm trust in what is taught and narrated in the Bible." It is our conviction that this representation of faith would certainly not have won so large a place in the Protestant Church if it had not contained an element of truth. And it is just through the fact that this idea has so long ruled in the Protestant Church, that one can realise how slowly great historical events like Luther's Reformation run their course. For the faith which is described in these words is really Roman Catholic faith. This is one of the strongest proofs of how closely we are still connected

with the Church from which we separated in the sixteenth century. We have indeed often heard that Protestants only believe what stands in the Bible, while Catholics believe also what their Church teaches. Just in this common way of distinguishing the difference is it evident that we are right in our assertion. One who so speaks of the two Churches shows that he finds the difference to lie simply in the amount of what is believed. Faith itself he holds to be the same in both. Multitudes both of opponents and adherents of Christianity find themselves at one in the idea that our faith consists in holding for true doctrines and narratives offered us with divine authority, and thenceforth depending upon them. But if there were really no other kind of faith in Christendom there would be no Protestant Christianity. We should only be distinguished from Roman Catholics as the half is distinguished from the whole. For anyone who remains at the standpoint of this conception of faith stops half-way when he is ready to

believe all the Bible says but denies belief to the claims of the Church. For in point of fact we have received the Bible through the Church which in the first century of its history accepted these writings as canonical. Thus the Christian who understands by faith simply a ready acceptance of things offered with divine authority undoubtedly remains half-way when he declares he will accept only that Word of God which is offered to him in the Bible. If he wants to be in earnest he must rather submit first of all to that authority from which we have received the Bible, namely, the Church. What is affirmed in the Catholic Church would accordingly appear to be the case, that it is simply due to weakness of character that believing Protestants do not become Catholics.

It is necessary to distinguish the essentially differing ideas of faith in Catholics and Protestants.

But things are not indeed so bad. In restrict-

ing themselves to the Bible, Protestants are quite right. This true fundamental principle, however, cannot be properly followed out if in conjunction with it the Catholic idea of faith is adhered to. There is, however, another idea of faith which we distinguish from the Roman Catholic as the Christian: that idea of faith for which Paul contended, and, after him, Luther. It would be unsuitable for me to quote in this place the scornful words which Luther has often heaped upon the thought that faith is the ready acceptance of what is written in the Bible, an acceptance which one must set before himself and to which he must compel himself. But I do remind you of these words in order to strengthen the assertion that the seed sown at the Reformation is even yet far from ripe, in days when the Catholic idea of faith against which Luther contended is still a power in the Protestant Church. Many who have a share in the leading of the Church and in its theological work let their hands be tied by

this power, because they fear to be reproached as unbelievers, that is to say, because they do not fear God alone, but fear men too, and that very greatly.

In the Catholic Church a true notion of what faith is, is not of such critical importance as in the Protestant Church.

In the Catholic Church the persistence of the false idea of faith has perhaps fewer evil consequences than among us. For the Catholic Church has within its complicated edifice counteracting influences. Luther, on the other hand, destroyed just these counter-vailing elements, and had to do so in order to open the way for the proper idea of faith. Such influences are, perhaps, mysticism and the Catholic doctrine of good works, and that materialising of the divine in its cultus which often sends such a strange thrill through us Protestants. The Catholic Church avails itself of these elements with the result of assisting its Christianity. But in the Protes-

tant Church, on the other hand, owing to the indelible memory of what Luther did, these means of help and completion cannot come much into force, although, in secret, they may in many ways be turned to service. On our theory faith is to do everything. Faith saves. We hold firmly to this, or rather, we are not drifting away from this. But as long as the Catholic idea of faith, to which so strong a promise can by no means be attached, is at the same time retained, it is easy to fall into a caricature of religious conduct which is too far contradictory to truth for one to be really in earnest about it.

Confusion results when Protestants cling to the Catholic notion of faith.

Faith justifies, that is, delivers and saves. What becomes of this Pauline proposition, if we graft into it that Catholic idea of faith which is also common among ourselves? A person is saved by agreeing to all that is offered him as the Word of God by those

authorities on faith, the Church or the Bible. It would be too strong to say that this faith consists in affirming something against which the person inwardly protests. But in any case this faith is the endeavour to hold the truth of what is not understood to be true. And is such an effort, and such a painful situation, to save a man? Certainly and evidently it cannot. Nevertheless the proposition that faith saves is rightly maintained in the Protestant Church. Under those conditions, however, it necessarily acquires the following meaning. The Christian who honestly tries to hold for true what he cannot grasp as true, says to himself, "God will one day reward me for this deed and at last save me." Reason and unreason, truth and falsehood, are so entangled in the human soul that it would be presumptuous to attack with hard words this religious attitude, which meets us at every step in the Christian Church. It is very possible for a Christian to know and share the proper religious attitude, the faith

which really saves, and yet at the same time, from habit, to share that false conception of faith without noticing that he himself has outgrown it. That may be true of Catholics as well as of Protestants. But we must speak more harshly to those who are called to serve the Church as theologians. It is our duty to leave no doubt that such a faith must work to the injury of the Protestant Church, and to do our best for its removal.

In earlier times the incomprehensible was not the stumbling-block it is to the modern doubter.

In the first place, a wall is raised that shuts many in our time out of Christianity, if they are told that in order to become Christians they must hold for true this or that doctrine because it is announced to them as God's Word, although it may be by no means clear to them. A man who knows the duty of truthfulness cannot accomplish this sort of thing without injuring his conscience. If

anyone becomes a Christian it is certainly not in consequence of this demand but in spite of it. And if anyone, repulsed by such a requisition, keeps at a distance from the preaching of Christ, it is not always his fault; the fault lies often also on those who laid on him such an inhuman burden. There certainly was a time when there was a meaning in asking of everyone, without further ado, to hold for true whatever a Christian ought to believe. In the Middle Ages it was possible so to act. For in those days the common picture of the world in which people lived was such that Christianity, as it was then understood, fitted into it without any trouble. We live in another age, in another world. In this world Christianity is a stranger. The man who grows up in the midst of modern civilisation is trained from his youth up in ideas of another sort, with which the ideas of the Christian faith by no means connect themselves as like in kind. No care of Christian parents can preserve a child of our time from this.

Modern society can command the means of living only by having a better mastery of Nature than men of the Middle Ages had. If we carried on industry on the methods then in use we should starve. And the modern forms of industry rest on the belief that the things we have to use are united and bound together with all other real things in a natural order. And so everyone who in the world of to-day works for a living, carries this belief about with him. But it is evidently not easily possible for one whose life is conditioned by the thought of an all-pervading law governing all phenomena, to appropriate and maintain even the commonest fundamental ideas of Christianity as things of the accustomed sort. There are few Christians of our time who have not in some way or another experienced the pain and the strain of the contradiction between the thought of a God who works miracles and hears prayers, and the thought of an infinite world ruled by law. Christian faith has indeed in the idea of

the almightiness of the supernatural God a means of getting beyond this contradiction. But no science can lay the foundation for this thought. It arises first in faith and is affirmed in the strength of faith. Thus for our generation the thoughts of faith must lose more and more the appearance of being natural. But this is no defect. For in religion it is never the self-evident that helps, but the miraculous. In the Middle Ages, when the most important ideas of Christianity for practical life had become quite customary and the object of a supposed scientific proof, they became no longer miraculous but profane; and so the unsatisfied religious need sought in other spheres for the miraculous by which faith lives. Is it really better that men should have to look for miracles in the Holy Blood at Wilsnack[1] and the like, or that we to-day

[1 Wilsnack, near Potsdam. Spots of blood were said to have appeared on three consecrated wafers at Wilsnack in 1383. The alleged miracle soon gave rise to wide controversy. Pilgrimages began to be made thither, but were forbidden in 1405. In 1412 the Magdeburg Synod

should be compelled by the irresistible divinely-guided course of history to find our miracles in God Himself and the certainty of His power and grace? In any case there is no longer any meaning in simply demanding that men of our day should hold for true the thoughts of the Christian faith. That imposes quite another burden than that which those of the Middle Ages had to carry by reason of the same demand; and the more sincere a man is, the more impossible is it thus made for him to become Christian.

We are oppressed by the demand that we are to appropriate forthwith all the ideas contained in Scripture.

Not less is the harm which this false idea of faith brings to those who count themselves Christian and want to be believers. Christians are indeed utterly deluded if they hold them-

declared the whole thing a fraud. In 1453 Pope Nicholas V. declared his belief in it. The first Protestant minister of the town burnt the three wafers in 1552.]

selves called and bound to appropriate and repeat with firm resolution as their own opinions all that such a man as Paul has said. Such a decision can only make us inwardly unhappy. The mental equipment of a Paul does not by a long way fit us just because we make so bold as to slip ourselves into it. It is always a grave error, even if one very easily committed, to suppose that we Christians are ordained by God to live as spiritual parasites on the thoughts of others. Of course it is true in every kind of education that the thoughts of those who have gone before are a source of strength to those who follow. And we should be the last to say that we can be Christians at all if the wonderful thoughts of the Bible do not go to our very heart. Christian faith is impossible without a reverent attitude to a sacred tradition. We know well that right living would cease with the connection between us and this tradition. But we certainly do not come into the right, living connection with it by making up our

minds to appropriate its thoughts and then giving them out as our own. We are to be no parasites; we must live by our own faith. How Luther wearied himself to make this clear! From the wide diffusion of this error there has grown up in our Church what Ritschl contended against as religious professionalism. If a man talks himself or others into the idea that he moves in a region of thought up to the level of which as a matter of fact he has not yet grown, there must arise a cramped unnaturalness. What was, in the case of the prophets, the simple and natural expression of a God-awakened life, is then necessarily made the object of an artistic technique. It is, of course, true that the Christian must preach to his congregation, not himself, but the Word of God. But a man can preach as the Word of God only what he has himself understood as the Word of God.

And the effort to do so leads to professionalism.

The preaching of a Christian who really

is on the same track as the prophets may be easily distinguished from the discourse of the mere professional. The latter will always have a copious flow of such words as lend themselves to the expression of the sublimest ideas of the faith or the most vehement religious excitement. But it is otherwise with the utterance of the real man of faith. In it we find before all else a living comprehension and exposition of some particular set of facts in which speaker and hearer find common ground. So to set forth these particular circumstances, and so to make them understood that they shall reach our hearts with the power of divine requirement and divine promise—that is the work of a true Christian discourse. A word can have for a man the significance of a word of God only when it brings him to true self-examination under the circumstances in which he stands at the moment. Every religious thought which does not become intelligible to us in this way remains foreign to us, though we may give it out ever so defiantly as the

expression of our own convictions and excite our imagination ever so strongly with it. And when so many in our Church reproduce with astonishing facility the sublimest results of religious reflection, regardless of the only way in which such thoughts can arise in a soul and become its own property, such preachers are injuring themselves and helping nobody.

Yet Ritschl does insist that Faith is submission to an authoritative Revelation.

To guard against the harm thus done Ritschl brings into line a proper understanding of faith. Connected with this is the fact that the leaders of what is known as the liberal school in theology have also vehemently opposed him. These theologians are, of course, through the influence of Schleiermacher, forced to feel strongly along with Ritschl the first evil pointed out above, namely, the reduction of faith to the level of a human act that goes against the conscience. But what they wish to put in the place of this false faith is not

Christian faith, but a religiousness which, in their view, is rooted in the nature of the human soul. They do not understand that Christian faith is unconditional submission to a Power which a Christian distinguishes from his own inner life—that is, to the Revelation of God. Of the two propositions—Faith saves a man, and, Faith is a submission to the authority of a revelation—they are willing to hold only the former. Ritschl maintained both. That made him incomprehensible to most of his contemporaries; but it also puts him in the front rank of those who have wanted to rescue and preserve the work of Luther from forms that are falling to pieces. His opponents busy themselves with attacks on his theological system and are delighted when they expose mistakes in it, as if it were not self-evident that such a system must offer to the view of other Christians much that is incomplete and contradictory. As imperfect Christians we must have imperfect systems. But, on the other hand, what is really great and imperishable in

Ritschl, namely, the strong internal connection of both of these fundamental propositions in his theology, works silently and irresistibly even on those who abuse him.

Faith involves a special experience of God.

Faith saves—that is, faith of itself places the person in whom it arises in a condition which is the beginning of the blessed life. The faith which accomplishes this is not a ready acceptance of the thoughts and words of others; still less does it consist in a rigid adherence to these. The longing of our souls after true life will not be stilled by receiving a doctrine about God, but only by finding God Himself, God Himself—that is, something else than the world in which we lose ourselves, something else, too, than the Eternal Cause of this world, a Being who lets us men of time have experience of eternal life. But eternal life is life in that which is eternal, and life in that which is eternal, so far as we can comprehend and experience it, consists in two inward feel-

ings: first, that we can make an occasion of inward joy, not only particular temporal things such as good health in our children, or having an honest daily calling, but also all that makes in any way a conscious element in our existence; secondly, that we willingly, from our hearts, bow before that Eternal whose claim we feel in the moral imperative, that Eternal which imposes on us the task of self-denial. Evidently the man who can feel both these things is inwardly cut free from the world and brought into a life in that which is eternal. The Power, contact with which makes us so rich and strong, is our God. A person who has not somehow experienced this has no knowledge of God, no faith, and, in the Christian sense, no God.

To find God is to be able to point to a specific instance in my life in which God sought and touched me.

But what is it to find this God? We have not found Him when we conceive a Power

such as we have just described as the very essence of God Himself. The bare thought of God helps us, as Luther says, just as little as a monk's cowl. A man can only say he has found God when it has become clear to him from some event in his own life to which he can assign a definite date that God has therein sought him out and touched him. This is the regular order of all living piety in all religions. There is therefore no religious thought which does not express this direct relation of God to the particular man who cherishes the thought. We do not possess, for example, the religious idea of the almightiness of God when we imagine a Power who can perform all possibilities. For we have faith's idea of the almightiness of God only when we conceive a Power *which at this particular moment is for our sake causing the whole reality in which we stand.* Many count it a scientifically demonstrable truth that God exists as the Almighty Lord of all things. Still more prevalent with us is the thought

that a man comes by the idea of morality to a certainty of God; that one who is wholly penetrated by the conviction of the rights belonging to the good, will necessarily conceive of the good as the Power to which all is finally subjugated. It is often said that our moral energy is asleep in us as soon as we are willing to let slip the thought that God really exists as the Almighty Will of the good. That is quite right; and a Christian will be the last to wish to dispute it. Yet the Christian faith in God and that moral enthusiasm which begins and ends in the thought of God are far from being identical. The thought that the good alone has power and gives life, by no means saves a man. Nay, the more sincerely earnest he is in his moral sentiments, the more will this thought consume him like a fire. For what is not good has then no share in true life. And who is good? Faith in moral enthusiasm makes human life a tragedy. That is indeed something, but it is not Christianity. Christian

faith saves the man in whom moral enthusiasm has ended in dismay. How, then, does this come about ?

The beginning of faith is a hopeful recognition that human history contains Jesus Christ.

We enjoy the company of men in whom we think we see a sincere prostration before the Eternal. And we are not drawn to them merely because they alone inspire trust. However woebegone and needy souls they may be in other respects, yet they act on us as a source of cheer because they look out on us from the depths of a deeply hidden joy. We say to ourselves: "Such a man could not keep always calm in surrender to necessity and always deny himself for the sake of the good if he did not feel himself secure in an unassailable possession." This is just the very secret of Christianity, that it puts into human life something which begins by making the richest or the poorest person so rich that he can influence others with the strength of real

love. Being a Christian consists above all in this, in gaining this inner wealth. What makes our souls rich, however, does not spring up of itself in the soul, but reaches us through our historical position. Not to despair of oneself because Jesus Christ is a real constituent of this our world—that is the beginning of Christian faith. To understand that, one must be able to see the peculiarity of Jesus which lifts Him sheer above all else that meets us in the world.

Our estimates of people help to form our moral ideal; Jesus alone rises above it.

We understand people by estimating their moral value. The moral imperative is the key to their inner life. In trustworthy people we find not only that they endure the test of the requirements of morality; we always feel, besides, that they advance us in the comprehension of that by which we measure them. They enrich us as we try to estimate and understand them. On the other hand, the

moral ideal which we learn to know through them brings us to a sharper perception of what is distorted in them. Thus they themselves take care that the ideal we thought we saw in them shall always grow to something higher than they are. If it were exactly the same for us with the Person of Jesus there would be no Christianity in the world. Certainly we draw near Him only if we put this great question regarding Him to our conscience and measure Him by the moral imperative. But the nearer we come to Him, the more does He become the instructor of our conscience. What the meaning of a moral command is, what good is, what moral power and completeness are, we feel that we see for the first time when our eyes open to see Him. That rock-firm will which we look for in those to whom we are willing to extend our confidence is visible to us in His perfect freedom from the fear of men and His spiritual freedom from the fear of death. The fulness of spiritual life for which our soul longs,

appears to us in the way in which He loves and hates. He loves those who need Him, and hates those who oppress these needy ones and lead them to destruction. The moral ideal does not rise above Him; for He makes it visible to us as something inexhaustible which lays hold of our hearts and minds, and He makes us feel most deeply how far we ourselves are from it. It is simply a fact that the appearance of Jesus recorded in the New Testament works upon us in this way. One who wants to controvert Christianity must explain away first of all this fact that multitudes are thus laid hold of by Jesus.

Faith begins when a man shares Jesus' own confidence in His power to save.

But the foundations of faith are not yet laid simply by the fact that the historical appearance of Jesus so affects us. There must be added the fact that the same Man who becomes judge and conscience to the person who comes face to face with Him, interests

Himself in him with a patient and unparalleled love. At the same time that He makes the sinner insecure by the simple power of His personal life He sets him on his feet by His kindness. Therefore those who have been led by Him to feel the bitterness of their plight, yet felt themselves for that very reason drawn to Him. It was thus that He once forgave sinners. He before whose eyes is unfolded the vast misery of mankind, their profound lovelessness and their weakness of will, has yet the calm trust that He can snatch them from the hell which in their own souls they have prepared for themselves, whether for the present or for the future. On the eve of a cruel death, in the midst of the visible failure of His work, His moral sensitiveness did not hinder Him from speaking those words which hand on through history His confidence in His own power and the meaning of His life. In these words He says that by looking back at His Personality all men after Him can be freed from their inward

dispeace and from the burden of their sin. Thus is it that He provides the forgiveness of sins now and for all time for all who look to Him, who feel His earnestness and goodness, and are so overpowered by His confidence in Himself.

This faith makes God so real that it issues in obedience to the revelation and consequent inward peace.

When all this forms part of the impression which Jesus makes upon us, our faith is beginning. For a man understands that experience of the person of Jesus if it comes upon him as the unmistakable touch of a supernatural Power full of love and truth. Whatever he may have heard before about God in other ways, he will now for the first time know that he has found God Himself. For now he not only cherishes thoughts about God which others have handed down to him or which he himself has excogitated; he lives in the midst of an experience in which he traces

God working upon him. In what he experiences of the Person of Jesus the Christian becomes certain that the Power of the good not only judges but redeems him. Thus Christian faith is created. It is simply the trust that Jesus wins from us by His personal life, and the ensuing joyful submission to the God who manifests Himself in Him and works upon us through Him. Such a faith in itself saves. It lays no burden on conscientious minds, for it does not ask us to hold for true something which remains incomprehensible. It is never a laborious work of our own, but, like all trusting, it is an experience of the effect another produces upon us. This genuine Christian faith is certainly not easier than the false faith which will hold for true every imaginable thing because the Bible or the Church says it. For we never come to an end of acquiring it. It arises in us when the good, as a power directed on us and saving us, becomes through Jesus Christ an undeniable fact of our own life. Such a

faith saves a man as nothing in the world can but the fact that he has found God. Thus in genuine Christian faith both these elements are united, submission to the authority of a revelation—which is the only thing that can demand unconditional obedience, because it is the secret power of the good will—and blessedness, the unquenchable emotion of deepest joy, which never suffers the Christian to be crushed under the burden of life. As we sing the hymn, "A safe stronghold our God is still," we do not mean that we will defiantly hold to our conviction and not allow ourselves to be stricken down although honour, wife, and children be taken from us; but we mean that even in dark and terrible experiences there is present with us an eternally-abiding happiness, the gift of God in Jesus Christ. It creates for us an unassailable realm of inward peace.

Faith does not involve the intellectual appropriation of every idea in the Bible.

One who has come so far is no longer able

to look with indifference on the Bible as an ordinary object of historical research. For he certainly hears in it the Word of God to humanity, a recapitulation of things history has produced and which no advance of history can render out of date. But he is certainly also far from the presumption of holding everything for true that stands in the Bible. He will indeed notice that through his faith he is now for the first time brought into a state of mind which can rightly understand the Prophets and Apostles. But he knows, too, that there is much in the Bible for which his understanding is not yet ripe. God will help us yet further. But, of course, we can grow in knowledge only if we exercise in secret the faith God has given us through Christ. A person truly awakened to faith hears quite calmly that much stands in the Bible which never can and was never meant to become part of our own intellectual property; for example, the whole ancient theory of nature and the traces of rabbinical theology and

Jewish eschatology in the New Testament. When a truly earnest faith sure of its ground freely acknowledges this—Luther, again, is an illuminating example—it will give free scope to that historical inquiry about the Bible which is the scientific task of theology. A faith, on the other hand, which withholds that acknowledgment enters necessarily into an alliance with insincerity, and must, for punishment, stand in fear of the facts.

The Church must take officially the same attitude to Scripture as each individual.

In the manner we have just described every man who is really living a Christian life in the Protestant Church secretly holds the faith. But shall this root-principle of the Reformation be the standard for each individual's inner life and yet not for the life of the Church? For against what we have just said about the Bible this objection is raised, "How shall the Protestant Church continue to exist if it does not obey the Bible as the Word of God?

And how can the Church be governed if this obedience is not to be demanded and assumed?" While the faith which saves is what we have described, yet the faith which makes possible the existence and government of the Church seems to be the rendering of that obedience. Nevertheless I hold that this distinction is not right. For if it is followed, then in Church government, and especially in the ministry, the standpoint of faith is surrendered out of practical considerations in themselves quite proper. No one has a right to prescribe as necessary for the Protestant Church anything which neither serves to awaken and maintain faith, nor is itself the fruit of faith. This must not be forgotten when, for the sake of the Church, one urges obedience to the Bible as God's Word. One fundamental proposition about the Bible which is the simple result of faith does indeed hold good for the Protestant Church. It is this. Every man for whom Jesus Christ has become the Word of the

Invisible God to himself stands with reverence before the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These make up the only traditions in which, for us, Christ is to be found. Therefore the knowledge of these books is a means of coming nearer Him and of creating for us a richer picture of that which inspires us with the true courage to live. We would therefore hear no preaching but that which expounds to us the Word of God out of the Holy Scriptures. For everyone who has won this inward position the Bible must have an inexhaustible content. For everyone who has learnt to bow himself to God there belongs to God alone a commanding authority to which he yields his whole self captive. Thus not every word of Scripture has that authority, but only those words in which, by the power of his faith, he already understands God speaking to him. The extent of such an understanding of Scripture may be small or great; life does not depend on that. The vital question is decided by this alone, "Have

we faith, and do we practise that faith in our life?" But if our knowledge of Scripture remains stationary and we become indifferent to the Bible, we may well take from this a warning that we are beginning to wither away.

True faith determines the proper attitude to Scripture, both for the Church and for individuals.

This is the position with regard to the Bible which, as a necessary and fundamental proposition, really results from faith. Doubtless something else is, as a rule, desired for the sake of the Church. It is demanded of members of the Protestant Church that they should straightway declare that they hold for true all that is taught or narrated in the Bible, although it is certain that in many instances the real meaning has by no means shone out clear to them. Their intelligence has this extraordinary demand made upon it owing to a practical necessity of Church order! If, for example, it is thought necessary to *prove* to

people a short system of doctrine such as has been developed in the Church, in most cases there is nothing for it but to refer back to an "It is written" and then say the proof is complete. Now it is a question if anything of that sort is necessary. Certainly theology ought to sum up as simply as possible the Christian knowledge inherited from the Fathers and offer it to the Church. But we should not do this with the claim that we will *prove* it, or with the demand that everyone shall, by a stormy mental decision, make it his own. We should rather put it forward as the expression of the inner world in which believers have lived, and tell Christians that they, too, will some day grow up to the comprehension of such things if only each in his own special situation exercises a right faith; and this right faith is something quite different from an assent resulting from a decision of the human mind. In religion there prevails reverence for what is secret. For even when God reveals Himself He still dwells in the thick

darkness. So such reverence is natural and a matter of course to the faith really awakened by Him. On the other hand, nothing is more like unbelief than the presumptuous dexterity which appropriates outwardly what can be revealed to faith alone. Faith knows how it grows in knowledge. Faith goes miraculously forward "from vision to vision." Faith cannot be manufactured. Perhaps it would be in harmony with this characteristic if the Church in its practice were to revive what the ancient Church seems to have thought it possessed in its *disciplina arcana*.[1] The true *disciplina arcana* for the Protestant Church would consist, first, in limiting the word 'faith' to that inner communion with God to which He Himself raises us; and, second, in setting forth

[1 "Disciplina arcana." In imitation of the heathen and Greek 'mysteries,' the early Church in the third, fourth and fifth centuries attempted to make a practice of keeping secret certain rites, *e.g.*, the Lord's Supper, Baptism, extreme unction, and certain forms of words, *e.g.*, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. These were not to be revealed to unbelievers or spoken about in their presence. The practice died out in the sixth century.]

the miraculous world of Christian knowledge, not before the unbeliever as something which he can take by force, but before the believer as a goal to which God will conduct the man who lives in the exercise of faith.

In the Bible only the parts we understand are for us in the meantime words of God.

Many doughty churchmen will of course be of opinion that this is going far too slowly. Certainly it is slow, like all healthy growth. But it results in fruit. On the other hand, only harm can come from making it a Christian duty to count things among our inner possessions which in truth we do not understand. In the case of those who with any earnestness embark on such a course nothing can result but the satisfaction of their own vanity, and a thoroughly false kind of worship. They want to submit to God's Word, but they forget that they cannot use God and His Word as they would men and human precepts. God asks for the heart. How

shall I with a free heart submit to ideas about which I have not yet arrived at any certainty that my faith, in virtue of which I am in real submission to God, can move in their atmosphere free and untrammelled? If I insist on undertaking this, I take up the same attitude to God and His Word as to human precepts. It is possible, of course, to follow the latter outwardly. What I call God's Word would then in truth have for me the character of a human precept oppressing the conscience just like the burdens which Luther threw off. This simple consideration ought to keep us from demanding for the Church's sake of one who would be a Christian immediate unquestioning assent to the words of Scripture. In such a way what ought gradually to become the Word of God to the Christian through his growth in faith is turned into something to be outwardly and worthlessly obeyed, and is thus treated as an arbitrary precept. But no one has a right to lay a yoke like this on the necks of disciples.

The Church must distinguish the faith responsive to God's revelation from an assent to doctrines.

For the life of the Church something quite different is to be demanded, something, too, which is being striven for by all faithful servants of the Church, to whatever ecclesiastical or dogmatic party they otherwise belong. The people must be ever taught afresh what faith is—how it arises, what sort of wealth it brings, what sort of duties it imposes. This alone is faith, that we become conscious of God's reality and of His grace working upon us in the fact that Jesus Christ is present to us in a simple human manifestation which can be understood by every man who is morally astir. The wealth of this faith is that it is continually making us new men in that it—that is, the nearness of God experienced therein—gives us power to conquer, and to be at home in the unseen. This faith fulfils its duty and becomes obedience when it uses this wealth in every situation of life, and subjects itself ever

anew to God and His truth. In many Protestant Churches it is in this way that the people are told of faith, not only in general terms, but also with loving penetration into special circumstances. But there is evidently also mistaken teaching about faith current among us, when so many people measure the Christian worth of a man by his agreement with this or that sum of apostolic doctrine which they hold to be exactly what is necessary. Such agreement is not the chief thing. The chief thing is faith, which makes us for the first time ready to assent to Christian teaching and to grow, be it rapidly or slowly, in knowledge. And though a Christian of to-day has as little apostolic knowledge as even Justin Martyr, if he only knows that through Jesus Christ he is brought face to face with God, he has in the main just what the great apostles had. So the Protestant Church should secure with iron hand that no one opens his mouth to preach the Gospel to a congregation unless he has shown that he can distinguish the faith which is the redeeming

gift of God from the worthless assent to uncomprehended doctrine. That would be in the Protestant sense true faithfulness to the Confession. For no one will dispute that on this distinction, and on the position which lies at its foundation, the work of the Reformation stands or falls.

We can compel attention to Jesus Christ as the basis of a theory of the universe, but we cannot compel faith.

Founding on Holy Scripture Luther has made clear the faith we have described as the spiritual experience in which, according to God's ordinance, a person is made humble yet strong, conscious of his misery, yet saved. Ritschl has carried forward this work of Luther. And seeing that we, his pupils, follow him in this matter, we do not yield ourselves to the delusion that because we are members of a university we must make it our business to establish this faith by scientific means. That is impossible, just as it is always im-

possible to bring anyone by proof to surrender himself to the impression made by a person and trust him. To begin with, we can only turn to those who are conditioned by the same historical point of view as we ourselves, and are thus ready for a Christian theory of the universe, for Christian judging and acting. Nevertheless I should count it an error if theology were on this account to be banished from the universities. Whoever is not entirely buried in elementary scientific work is compelled to range himself in history on the side of some particular theory of the universe. Everyone especially is compelled to do so who is supposed to investigate and picture historical events. A person completely indifferent in this respect could perhaps write a history of clothes, but certainly not a history of people. But every other student, too, unless he is willing to become great as a student but perish as a man, will develop within himself, as his personality grows ripe and full of character, a theory of the universe for

which he has no convincing scientific proof, but for which nevertheless he stakes his character. What is often charged against us as a special sign of our unscientific method is encountered in everybody in this connection. Will one, then, say to us that the historic Christ, who is for us the motive and ground of that faith in God which is our theory of the universe, is not such a firmly defined indubitable quantity as to be able to serve in this way? There are lives of Jesus by Strauss and Renan, by Beyschlag and by Weiss. Which gives us the historic Christ? We answer, "No one of them." It is altogether a mistake to desire a ground for a religious theory of the universe which will work with absolute certainty. He who wants this goes into the Catholic Church. There only is that ostensibly to be found. Yet our appeal to the historic Christ is right. This, of course, does not mean that we can demonstrate the Christ who is the ground of our faith to everyone as an indubitable fact, as we could the

fact, say, that a town already existed in this place in Luther's day. But in this we mean to say that in every man the necessary conditions exist for his finding in the tradition about Jesus in the books of the New Testament, the picture of a Man who by the power of His personal life holds us suspended over the abyss. We will compel no one to find a Redeemer in Jesus. But something similar is to be observed in every other theory of the universe as well. For example, one who subscribes to the naturalistic theory certainly finds in Natural Law a mysterious Power, not felt by us in the same way, but satisfying his mind. He is obviously biassed by his principles towards rating personal life lower than natural life, although he is obliged as occasion arises to renounce this standpoint, if he does not want to behave with inhumanity. But against the ideas and findings of this naturalistic theory of the universe everyone will shut his mind who does not like to forget, in his concern with what is, the things that ought to be.

The study of Christianity is justified by its influence on character.

Thus all religions are alike in their inability to compel anyone by scientific proof to take up their standpoint. If the universities were willing to have no theology but one which aimed at exercising this compulsion on behalf of Christianity, we would have no place here. For we cannot make this our aim. But I think that even those among us who are not willing to be Christians, will yet, as men of character, agree with us that nothing in the world is so well worth consideration as the thoughts in which a character unfolds itself while seeking an answer to the question of the meaning and the aim of life—that is to say, while seeking a theory of the universe, a thing which always expresses some sort of religion. And the fact that in German universities the prominent subject of their research is Christianity and not Islam, is sufficiently explained by the fact that most Germans wish to be, not Mohammedans, but Christians.

THE MORAL LAW

As understood in Romanism and in Protestantism

Introduction by the Translator

THIS work was originally an address delivered at the Saxon Church Conference meeting at Chemnitz in 1899.[1] Though its form is controversial, it is not really a polemic against Rome so much as a word in season to Protestants. It seems to present a large part of Professor Herrmann's message to his time. He seeks here to arrive at some fundamental truths about morality by a study of two opposite conceptions of the moral law entertained in Romanism and by Protestants.

To arrive at the distinction between Romanist and Protestant ethics our author starts from the contrast between the two conceptions of faith. Rome requires for faith a passive condition of mind, receptive of ideas

[1 The German title is *Römische und Evangelische Sittlichkeit.*]

which the mind does not itself assist in producing, but which are merely imposed on it from without by authority. With Protestants the believing mind is active. Its beliefs are the product of an activity of the soul aroused by contact with the personal Christ who is the object of faith. Here doctrines are no longer imposed from without and accepted on authority alone.

A parallel contrast is found between the two systems of ethics. For Romanists the moral law is a formula imposed from without only. When a man's action conforms to the words of that prescribed rule he is moral. Protestantism sees that outward acts are insufficient of themselves to constitute morality. They are indications of the all-important state of mind or inward disposition lying behind them. The law is to be written on the heart. For that inward vision of right presents itself to our consciousness, not as a rule imposed by an outside authority but as the product of an inward activity of our own soul aroused by

contact with the personal Christ who is the object of faith. But Protestants too often fail to apprehend their own principles.

Students of Pauline theology will not miss the close parallel here with the Pauline antithesis between law and grace. The apostle's doctrine, which seemed so revolutionary that it cost him his life, was that no law, not even that delivered on Sinai, could give satisfactory results. The Spirit—that divine gift of an instinct for goodness in tune with Christ's—raises a man to a plane above both state law (Rom. xiii. 7 f.; *cf.* 1 Peter ii. 16 f.) and Mosaic law (Gal. v. 14–18), and consequently above the law even of natural conscience which takes the place of Mosaic law for those outside Hebrew revelation (Rom. ii. 14–15). At the same time law had a use as a treasury of first principles corrective of fanaticism (1 Cor. ix. 9, 13; 1 Tim. i. 8; 2 Tim. iii. 16).

The proof that Protestant morality is right in this, and Rome's morality wrong, is found by Professor Herrmann in two directions:

(1) in the moral debasement flowing from Rome's theory and found in her doctrine of 'equivocations' and in her theory of 'probabilism'; (2) in the teaching of Jesus Christ, whose aim always was to make good actions spring, not from submission to an external rule, but from an independent moral judgment in His disciples.

That Professor Herrmann's view is that of the great Reformers seems undeniable. But it is probable that the complaint is as true of the Christianity of this country as of that of Germany, that the jubilant note of sixteenth-century ethics—or rather of first-century ethics—has in some quarters died away, that the immemorial custom of centuries has been reasserting itself, and that the lazy habit is being re-established in pulpit and pew alike of doing what we are told instead of forming a mind of our own through Christ and His Spirit.

The appeal to authority on lines distinctively Roman Catholic is made in a recent manifesto by Lord Halifax. "The only remedy is a

frank acceptance all round of that principle of authority in matters of faith and practice which distinguishes the Church from the Sects" (*Nineteenth Century* for April 1903, p. 547).

Perhaps a word should be added as to Professor Herrmann's attitude to modern historical criticism. It has sometimes been suggested, especially when criticism seemed unusually destructive, that faith has to do, not with the historical Jesus, whose personality may any day be shattered by the critics, but with the ideas associated with His name, that in fact the doctrines matter, not the person. Professor Herrmann would say it is the Christ as a living person that matters. That life of His is an essential part of the 'reality' in which we find God. It is His life that brings God near to us and enables us to realise Him. We dare not try to silence criticism; but if any critics were to tell us Jesus was only a portrait painted by men to set forth the ideal their own souls yearned after, we should not believe them. We are sure of Christ. His is a real

life in which God not only once worked, but in which He still reveals Himself to *us*.

The appendix was published this year. It grew out of a small reply to Rev. Joseph Adloff, appended to the second German edition. It has become a new and fuller treatment of many themes involved in the controversy, such as the relation of the Christian to authority, to tradition, and to Scripture, the Kantian doctrine of autonomy, the ultimate basis of the duty of speaking the truth, the Thomist doctrine of ethics, etc. Consequently it has been included as presenting many interesting aspects of our author's teaching.

To British readers German thought often seems involved only because its modes of connection are different from our own. The translators have therefore taken the liberty of adding headings to the author's paragraphs to indicate the turns of the argument.

Notes added by the translator are distinguished by being enclosed in square brackets.

D. M.

PUTNEY, *September* 1903.

Preface to the Third German Edition

The second edition of this pamphlet was sent out with the words: "It is not to be expected that Catholic Theology will seriously controvert the views here worked out." To my delight a distinguished German theologian in the Church of Rome has after all attempted to make a serious reply. Joseph Mausbach's utterances were very welcome. He feels himself very safe in attacking me, because he thinks he can trace my demonstration of the corruption of morality by his Church to a misunderstanding. But the way in which he makes out this misunderstanding is exceedingly interesting. For it shows with special distinctness the lack of clearness of moral

vision to which the Church of Rome is held. Against the characteristics of Romanist ethics which I had shown to exist in probabilism Mausbach tries to set up another which he says has its foundations in the maxims of Thomist ethics. In doing this he makes it evident that he is in a hard case with respect to probabilism. He wants to defend it; in view of the well-known decisions of Rome that of course is not to be avoided. But yet he is not so hardened as to be able to defend the worst elements of it. So he manages by saying nothing about it, emphasising all the more vehemently, on the other hand, how grand are the principles of Catholic ethics. I have gladly accepted the challenge to give special attention to this precious possession of the Church of Rome. In this way I admit this pamphlet has had to include an area which was not originally contemplated. The Conference address delivered at Chemnitz stands as it was, essentially unaltered, on pages 1 to 53. I hope that it will serve now, as it did before, to bring out in bold

touches the contrast between the methods of ethical thought in Romanist and Protestant Christianity respectively. From pages 53 to 176 there follows the controversy with the Romanist theologians who have tried to refute my statements. It will not be without profit to see what it is that compels these men to deny the simple principles of ethics which force themselves upon their own minds as inevitable. The tyrannical supremacy of what their Church calls religious faith excludes that rectitude and uprightness without which no one can attain to clearness of moral vision. Wherever this form of Christianity tries to hold in its grasp men who are prepared to be convinced it becomes violent, and thus both irreligious and immoral. The worst things in the Church of Rome are not the horrors which she would fain see hidden away, but the principles of which she boasts.

W. HERRMANN.

Preface to the Second German Edition

THERE has reached me from the Catholic side a reply which I should have liked to append in full. In the form of a refutation it corroborates all my criticisms. I shall return to it in an appendix. It is not to be expected that Catholic theology will make any serious attempt to meet the views which are here worked out. In the following pages the thought set forth is that moral obedience and piety are fundamentally the same as thinking for ourselves about ourselves. Moral obedience is the focussing of our thoughts upon the idea of the final aim of our life, a idea which makes our volition really independent or genuine. Piety is the focus-

sing of our thoughts for the contemplation of the Power which draws near to a man when he becomes aware that he is being stirred to the moral act of thinking for himself, or, if you prefer it, when he begins to be really alive. I am of opinion that religion is not a turning away from what is real, but the focussing of our thoughts to which we are led by meeting with One who is real, and in whose presence there is nothing possible for us but to submit ourselves in reverence and in trust. I know no other way of arriving at that but the narrow way of moral obedience, or the way of the law, which conducts us from confusion to intellectual clearness of view. It is only those who follow this way that can become religious. However different piety and moral obedience may be, they are one in this respect at least, that in both of them a man desires to deal seriously with himself and to become sincere.

The Roman Catholic Church urges her members along the opposite path. She fills those who belong to her with the notion that

they would be pious and morally in earnest if they were prepared to be exceedingly circumspect and to suppress their own powers of perception. But whoever lets himself be persuaded that he is saving his soul by running away from what is real, or by deliberate renunciation of truthfulness, will be obliged to abandon any serious consideration whatever of these matters. That slumber of the soul which he expects to help him would be in the utmost danger of being disturbed if he were stirred up to have a personal vision for himself of what is morally good. By the restlessness which the perception of such visions produces, a man is made to feel repulsion for the sloth which consists in a capacity for soothing himself with words which have in them none of the ring of his own personal conviction. One who has been morally awakened can never again get away from the question whether he is sure that these words come from God. What is called in the Roman Catholic Church "caring for his salvation" can no longer be

maintained when, either by his independent perception of what is good, or by the serious earnestness of his conscience, a man has opened his eyes wide enough for God to reveal Himself to him. For this reason Romanist theology dares not launch out upon a vigorous quest for truth in the region of morals. The Romish Church knows that truth is detrimental to her interests. Her ethics may therefore promote the advancement of information about the soul, the knowledge of how weak and how cunning a man is in his times of trouble; but ethical knowledge it cannot promote.

Most of the notices in the German periodicals which have reached me are friendly in tone. One, in the *Kreuzzeitung* of 3rd December 1899, is a decided exception to this. The review is interesting for the information it gives that the writer is Pastor Wolff of Friedersdorf.[1] As the editorship of

[1] According to this the letter M with which the theological outpourings of the *Kreuzzeitung* are so often signed would be understood as an inverted W.

the *Evangelische Kreuzzeitung* has now been handed over to this theologian, we should use his utterances to arrive at the tendency which has long been powerfully influencing the leadership of the Protestant Church in Prussia, but which now, as is evident from the position of its theological productions, while it may still accept a leading place if it is given one, does not wish to fight for one any longer. In Protestant theology there are certain notes which are dying away. But, on the other hand, we encounter in it with special distinctness the monstrous error which hierarchical and pastoral orthodoxy is spreading throughout our nation, even while it claims to represent the cause of Jesus Christ, and does in many respects actually represent it. Against what I have said the article speaks as follows: "He even ventures as far as the following sentence: 'We should feel it to be a sin if we ventured to treat a proposition as true while the ideas contained in it were not our own ideas' (page 103). We are quite prepared to believe him

when he adds: 'The demand that we should do so we feel to be a hindrance to us.' The rationalism of the Ritschlian school appears here in all its nakedness." So then a person who shrinks from representing a Scripture statement as true the ideas of which are not his own ideas—such a person is reckoned in the *Kreuzzeitung* as a rationalist. On the other hand, a person who represents a Scripture statement as true, although its ideas are not his own—*i.e.*, are not reckoned by him as true—a person who so acts is, in the estimation of the *Kreuzzeitung*, a Christian believer. That position evidently involves the delusion that a person may become inwardly changed by coming into external contact with things which are foreign to his inmost self. That delusion prevails undisturbed in the Roman Catholic Church, and there it hands over Christianity to the jurists. There is no need to have it so among us. We may still count on being understood when we tell the people that they will never become Christians by being ready

to adopt things which can never bring them any inward and spiritual change. They still understand when they are told that Christian faith is heartfelt obedience, that is to say, reverence and trust towards that personal Spirit who, while He leaves no man in the world alone, yet speaks to us most plainly in the Christian Church, in the Bible, and in the Christ they preach. This hope we cherish, because among us the word conscience still has a sound which will not allow itself to be ignored. This word signifies for our people a reminder that the commandment of morality lays claim to our heart of hearts, and so is meant to be no mere limit placed upon our appetites, but the expression of our own inward thought. That experience constitutes a spiritual bond between men and Jesus Christ. But that involves a mighty force, if men feel themselves to be in duty bound to be independent, and know they are lost should they not follow their own convictions. By these means Romanist 'faith' is destroyed, the sort

of faith for which the *Kreuzzeitung* puts in its good word. Whoever wishes to remain morally in earnest must acknowledge to himself that the only authority to which he has the right to subject himself is one which rouses and develops his spiritual independence. That is effected by the personal Spirit, who makes all that find Him see that He alone is worthy to be supreme. But doctrines which claim our 'belief,' although it is impossible for us to conceive of the ideas they express as being the truth, take from us our responsibility for our own thoughts. Such an authority, bringing moral ruin to men, is set up in Rome in the name of Christ. But the Protestant Christianity of the *Kreuzzeitung* is also of opinion that it cannot do otherwise than follow the same line.

And so even in these Protestant circles a defence is set up for the fundamental idea of Jesuit morality, that the moral law, the law of our God, is given us from without, which means that it should not present itself to our consciousness as the expression of our own

inward thought, but should be a limitation placed upon our freedom. In the review referred to I am spoken of as follows: "So in the most determined way he gives up the idea that the moral command is given us by God, that is to say, from without." This sentence is capable of being understood as asserting that I give up the idea that the moral command is God's command. But as I have defended that idea with the utmost possible determination, the sentence must have a different meaning. The reviewer evidently takes objection to my opinion that we are not to regard the law of God as one given us from without, because our God is not a police officer but the Father and Lord of spirits. That is to say, he holds the notion that the moral law, because it is God's law, cannot and ought not to be to us the eternal code of right which we ourselves apprehend. The Protestants of the *Kreuzzeitung* are unaware that with this notion they are steering straight for the destruction of conscience, for the secularisation of

the Church, for the throne of the Pope. Owing to this lack of clearness they are markedly distinguished from consciously Romanist Christians. But perhaps they are aware that the prevalence of their views is diffusing among the nation a characterless Christianity; and perhaps many among them will think that that is just as it should be.

But still many of them are too strongly under the influence of the Bible not to experience painful sensations when Christian faith and Christian morals are within their own circle turned into mere external actions. Nevertheless they shrink back in terror from the idea of Jesus, that in his moral acts the Christian should follow his own convictions, give practical expression to his own moral sense, or bring forth fruit from himself. That is to say, they are involved in a self-contradiction. Now, that may have a cause which is even very respectable. The legal fabric of society, the State, is dissolved if every man

wants to follow his own notions. We must be prepared to obey an authority which has no time to explain its orders to us. Else we arrest the running of the machinery of the State. But for ourselves too, in order to keep in good health there is nothing more necessary than to obey orders. Without taking rest in silent obedience no one sustains the burden of existence. The desire for a strong government is therefore genuinely human, and resistance to it is inhuman folly, from which not only the State must be delivered, but most of all those who are attacked by the disease. They want to defend this truth, but they defend it in the wrong place, when for the sake of it they give up the fundamental idea of Christian morality. Whoever has become morally independent knows how to obey as well. He obeys the powers that be for conscience' sake, even when he himself cannot justify their orders. The State must count on such an obedience on the part of spiritually free citizens which is rendered to

the powers that be for conscience' sake. But then the very State is badly served, if for its sake we arrest that enfranchisement of the conscience which Jesus Christ has brought into the world. Historical structures like the Church of Rome, which have no good conscience, have a need for the protection that comes of the suffocation of the conscience. The state in which *we* live needs, on the contrary, live consciences.

A similar case arises when Protestant Christians are zealous in assuring us that Christian faith should be an inward conviction, or a part of our thinking, and yet consider it necessary to demand a *belief in doctrines* which have not been grasped as true —a belief, that is to say, which is the very opposite of an inward conviction, or of our thinking. This contradiction is of course to be traced back to the fact that many Protestant Christians, without cutting themselves adrift from the memory of the Reformation, yet do not free themselves from the character-

istics of Romanism. Another thing that works in the same direction is the desire felt to meet a certain stupid lack of religious reverence which needlessly contracts the lives of men. But in this it is of course forgotten that it is only with good that we can overcome evil. But there is one thing more to be considered. All religions which have their roots in a historical tradition are threatened nowadays by a danger which was unknown in earlier times. Their continuance is brought into question by the fact that a science of history has grown up. This science not only sweeps to one side the legends of the Church of Rome, it also renders insecure those historical records on which our faith would fain rely. That this danger is severely felt in our Church is something to be only glad of. But as a rule the method of warding off the danger is only a feeble imitation of the Romish Church. Protection is sought in ordinances, that is, in the means afforded by law. Above all, faith itself is turned into an arrangement

with which everyone can comply. In actual fact it is not difficult by these means to render historical inquiry innocuous. For as soon as its results conflict with the statements which under the name of 'faith' have become a Church arrangement they are rejected. Obviously every one has to reject them who wants to belong to a Church resting on such arrangements. All that is quite plain. The government of the Church is carried on upon those principles, and the Christian people quite see that it is all right. But it is just as plain that on these lines we should have a feeble imitation of the Romanist ecclesiastical system, morally as baseless as that is, but far weaker in worldly forces. For we notice at the same time that the leaders of the Protestant Churches cannot be brought to apply those plain principles without hesitation. Certainly the Christian people are often not a little astonished at this lack of decision in a state of things that is so plain. But I am of

opinion that in this hesitation there is to be found a priceless relic of Protestant Christianity. Men can still see that it is morally impossible to save the Church from science by such methods. If, nevertheless, they are for ever grasping at the expedient of making faith into an arrangement which is to be superior to history and to historical inquiry, just as the Roman Catholic Church claims that it should, that is certainly in many cases only an expression of the utmost embarrassment. Even the cleverest people do not know how otherwise it is possible to ward off from the Christian Church the danger with which its foundations are threatened by the historical investigators. It is, in fact, not possible in any other way. But we are not to conclude from that, that we are to adopt this method. That is not true, because Christianity is not to be saved at this time of day by vandalism and self-seeking. On the contrary, we should conclude, that every defence against the danger

must be renounced. The Christian Church, as long as she is in the world, must bear with the fact that the very science whose unhindered activity she must herself advocate if she is to keep a good conscience, is fraught with danger to her. Only on one condition indeed can a Christian in this position remain calm and confident. He must be able to exercise trust that he will always continue to overcome the dangers which he cannot escape. No science can give him that confidence. But he wins it if in the personality of Jesus, as he himself meets with it in the traditional records, he experiences that he is brought into touch with the revelation of that Spirit which lays compulsion on his inmost nature. From that point onwards we can view with calm all the enterprises of historical criticism. For in that experience there has been extinguished any possibility of our regarding the portrait of Jesus as the creation of men who longed for some such revelation of that Spirit. But if He Himself stands undeniably

before us, then He becomes to us the most important element in that reality which makes an impression on our hearts, and on which we meditate when we honestly seek after God. Then by means of His strength we get free from our difficulties. Only those who in this way become witnesses for the reality and power of the personality of Jesus belong to the Christian community. All others are still standing outside it. They cannot be helped by prescribing to them what they are to believe, or by any other external application. But they may be helped indeed, if persons whose hearts that experience has warmed will show themselves kindly to them, and serve them. It is not by means of things that pretend to be imperishable that Christianity continues to live on, but by the fact that there are always persons to be found who by their contact with the Bible tradition become witnesses to the personality of Jesus and follow Him as their guide.

So then, while we can find excuses if the strength of Protestant Christianity in our Church is hampered, and its profoundest difference from Romanist Christianity is obscured, yet we must set to work to prevent this state of things from continuing. For this it is before all else necessary that we should become as clearly as possible conscious of that in which all are fundamentally at one who inwardly belong to Protestant Christianity. We know that we are most deeply divided from Rome by this, that we will not have any immoral Christianity, and therefore will not have any faith which is not an independent conviction. But this purpose evaporates in empty words, if we do not become conscious of the strength in which we have the advantage of the Romanists. Every Protestant Christian can find Jesus for himself, and can make clear to himself as an experience of his own how this personal Spirit not only attracts men and uplifts them, but also confers peace on those who

hold firmly to Him. If our faith arises only out of the power of personal goodness over our hearts, a power which we ourselves grasp, then there is nothing in this faith that is not our own experience and free conviction and gratitude for God's gift. In this there lies a strength which the Roman Catholic Church lacks, and which is more than a match for all her arts. From this alone, too, proceeds real reverence for the Scriptural tradition. Whoever has in any way become conscious that by Holy Scripture as by nothing else he is brought into connection with that personal Spirit whom he must obey and to whom he owes his freedom, will not be without reverence for the Holy Scriptures.

Nevertheless, among us the process still goes on of repressing the pure kind of Protestant Christianity in order to prolong the life of a theology and of an ecclesiastical method which commend to men as the way of salvation, not thinking for themselves, but illusions and the suppression of the ideas

which they really hold to be true. Then, too, it is not to be wondered at that in such a place as the *Kreuzzeitung* the fundamental idea of Jesuit morality can venture out into the open.

W. HERRMANN.

The Moral Law

As understood in Romanism and in Protestantism

§ 1. *Protestant and Romanist notions of faith differ too much for faith in one creed to unite us.*

A distinguished Roman Catholic was recently desirous of showing that there still existed an element of belief common to us both. The comfort he administered to us was that, at least as regards their belief in the Apostles' Creed, Catholics and Protestants were at one. We gladly join him in the patriotic desire to give prominence to whatever unites us. But we do not regard the reference to this particular point as a happy one. We do not hold, and we have no right

to hold, the same faith as the Catholics in the Apostles' Creed. Of course there are many evangelical Christians who have accepted the unquestioning use of the statements in this creed as a precious inheritance from their forefathers. But it is not in that habitual use that their faith consists. Whether by this means they actually attain to Christian belief at all, depends entirely upon how they use its statements. Traditions about other people's experiences must help us to form experiences of our own. Otherwise they do not help us at all. Of course we agree with the Catholics in holding that a man is helped by becoming a Christian. But as to how he becomes one, and what he gets by it, our opinions differ greatly.

§ 2. *Romanist faith exercises a powerful and manifold influence on a man, but leaves his inner life unchanged.*

They think it all depends on a man's entrance into the ordered life of the Church.

He must allow himself to be guided by Romish priests. Then he will meekly receive the Sacraments ; and he will resolutely reject everything in himself or his surroundings which contradicts the Church's teaching. In this way he possesses Catholic faith and Catholic Christianity. There is no doubt that a man can be powerfully influenced by such means, and that not only outwardly but inwardly as well. We do so easily rust into our accustomed habits ! That is what happens, too, with anyone who has formed the habit of keeping definite statements of belief before his mind with all the added emphasis which they receive alike from his anxiety about his soul, from his fear of other believers, and from the authority of the Church. He can in this way secure the disappearance from his own mind of every doubt as to the strength or the truth of what he has allowed to be imposed on him by outward authority. No one can refuse to say of such a person that he has become an unexceptionable specimen of

Catholic Christianity and a convinced defender of Catholic truth. But it does not take long to detect where the fire of such a conviction is burning. This Church brings comfort to many of the persons whom she rules, and subjects them to a discipline which is conducive to the peace of states. There is just one point at which her Christianity stops short. The man's innermost life—the thing he himself wants to be—is untouched by it. The Catholic's own independent life is never to be found *in* his Christianity, but only alongside of it. The only thing in which he is really independent is his desire for happiness. To be saved—that is to say, to be well off throughout the long eternity,—that is what he wants whatever happens. Such a desire after happiness belongs to a man, not by virtue of his Christianity, but by nature. On the other hand, all that a Catholic possesses by virtue of his Christianity he accepts as incumbent on him, because he has been told by other people that he cannot be saved with-

out these burdensome conditions. He makes up his mind to treat as true all that the Church teaches, in the Apostles' Creed for instance. But if something else were offered him as the Church's teaching, he would treat that something else as true in exactly the same way. In fact, the ideas contained in these doctrines do not express his own real opinions. They remain something external to him. He may possibly cling to them with great fervour for fear of losing his salvation. But his own soul does not give birth to these ideas. It regards them only as something in which to wrap itself up, while its own inner life moves among other ideas, which must not of course contradict the Church's teaching, but which would be quite compatible with different doctrines.

§ 3. *Illustration from the Carmelites' scapulary.*

The Carmelites[1] possess an article of cloth-

[1] An order founded in twelfth century on Mount Carmel. First Chapter held 1247 at Aylesford in England;

ing which the Virgin Mary is said to have presented to their Order more than six hundred years ago. He who in his dying hour, confiding in the Holy Virgin, puts that garment on, need give himself no anxiety concerning his salvation. The newer Catholic theology holds it to be quite possible that the Carmelite Order should receive a treasure of such efficacy. At most it ventures to express a doubt or two as to whether the gift actually took place. On the other hand, in the previous century, a cardinal who afterwards as Benedict XIV. became one of the best of Popes, stood up for the legend, which, in fact, forms part of the Romish Breviary. At the same time he defended as theologically unimpeachable the Virgin's declaration: "He that

it elected Simon Stock as General. "According to a pious tradition (fromme Sage) the Holy Virgin, under whose patronage the Order had been placed (by Innocent IV., 1247) had appeared to Simon Stock during prayers and bidden him give the scapulary (Lat. scapulare, a cape, from scapulae, shoulderblades) to his monks as their costume." Wetzer and Welte, *Dictionary of Catholic Theology*, 1848, vol. ii. German, p. 364.]

dies in this coat shall not undergo the fire eternal."[1] This garment, then, is, of course, a completely external means of salvation. But just the same is true of the doctrines which the Catholic 'believes,' as he calls it, without there being anything in himself to lead him to such notions. The decision to believe these doctrines is exactly the same act as the decision to put on the scapulary of the Carmelites. The Catholic does both to secure his salvation. And in both cases he puts on something which has nothing to do with the inner life of his soul.

§ 4. *To Protestants, faith is an inward change, and acceptance of what is not heartily believed is to them a sin.*

Among Protestant Christians, that at least ought not to be the case. It is true, they too

[1] Compare "De Festis Domini nostri Jesu Christi et beatae Mariae Virginis," lib. ii. et vi. Benedict XIV.'s argument is quoted with approval in Wetzer and Welte's *Kirchenlexicon*, 2nd edit., vol. ii., 1868, and seems therefore to express the position occupied by Catholic science to-day.

will often say they believe in the teachings and narratives of the Bible. But in the strict sense of the words, the object of their faith is something quite different. According to our view a man does not become a Christian by deciding to treat these as true, and then trying to regulate his conduct accordingly. Such a person we consider still far short of being a Christian. He becomes one only if those doctrines and narratives of the Bible help him to that inward change which is what we really call Christianity. A Catholic will object: "But it is certain that the Bible cannot give me any help, if I do not accept its doctrines as true; and so my first step must be to decide to do so." In so saying he raises the very point on which Catholic and Protestant faith part company.[1] For to his objection we

[1 I regretfully decide that here and elsewhere the German 'evangelisch' must be rendered 'Protestant.' In Germany, as in France and Italy, Protestants are increasingly preferring the word evangelical as less negative (though protesting has its positive side too), and as free from certain associations fixed to 'Protestant' by adversaries.]

must reply: "The decision which your side demands as the primary one is contrary to our conscience. We should feel it to be a sin if we ventured to treat a proposition as true while the ideas contained in it were not our own ideas. If we find a statement of that kind in the Bible, we may very well decide to wait and see whether the truth of it will not become evident to us, as we ourselves become inwardly clearer and stronger. But we could promise ourselves no good results from a resolution to treat it as true without further question. The demand that we should do so, we feel to be a temptation to us. It can only prevent our being taken up with what really can help us."

§ 5. *Protestant faith arises out of actual experience of facts—of our moral need, of God in our life, of God in Christ, etc.*

For earnest men there is ultimately no interest in anything but in what is real, *i.e.*, what they can pronounce and must for them-

selves pronounce to be real. Such realities are the more important to us in proportion as we notice that they enable us to make progress, widening, for instance, our circle of vision, enhancing our joy in life, rendering our intellectual activity clearer and stronger. Most important of all to us would be a reality that gave us the impression of being powerful enough completely to revolutionise us. The notion of such a spiritual revolution is a current one with us all. We understand what is meant by the challenge, "Repent!"[1] It means we must labour to rise above the life which nature has given us. As long as we remain completely dependent on our environment, as long as we fulfil simply the desires of the flesh, we perish in the eternal dead-level. Under such conditions we are not independent, and therefore we are not really alive. We are seldom quite without a warning that this state

[1 "Repent." The unusual German phrase here, "alter your mind," is an attempt to render literally the Greek word for 'repent,' μετανοεῖν.]

of things must not always continue with us, but that we must attain to true life. But more distinctly still there stands before us the fact that we cannot do so by ourselves. We see what it is we need, the spirit's control over the flesh, an end to our dependence on our environment, spiritual independence, an outlook on a future full of pure and eternal aims. Whoever is acutely conscious of these needs experiences at first profound sadness and impotence. But there are many who have escaped out of this distress. One of the ways in which that is possible is by our ceasing to be sensitive to it. We can little by little accustom ourselves to the fact that no river of the joy of life flows through the secret places of our heart. Especially so long as things go tolerably well with us, we can be satisfied, if at least occasional moments of comfort are granted us. But, all the same, it is spiritual death to be able to forget how poor we are. But throughout the whole of humanity there have always been men of

another kind. Individual souls here and there have always both achieved and laid to heart experiences by reason of which they have occupied a new position in life, no longer as dependents on the charity of chance, but as themselves rich. But this happened to them only for the reason that they did not trifle life away, but, while striving earnestly to attain a purpose that was both morally clear to them and not to be shaken, listened to what their experiences had to tell them. And so every one of them came through experiences of his own which showed him that the soul's pure and strong life of goodness and righteousness, after which he himself yearned, was, in fact, the manifestation of the Power who is over all. Of the way in which this faith in God, armed with a "nevertheless" (Ps. lxxiii. 23), fought against experiences which contradicted it, the Old Testament gives us the most powerful picture. But the case is the same with Christian faith as well. Each of us has discovered in what he has himself experienced

such indications of a spiritual Power, that he knows himself to be under obligation to a full self-surrender in reverence and in trust. For us, too, this faith in God lives on through dark hours, only by resolute obedience to that spiritual Power which has hidden itself from us perhaps for the moment, but the reality of which has been at other times incontestably clear to us. In One alone is the faith we cherish ampler still. We have before us the personality of Jesus. We are able very clearly to contemplate how He experienced the consciousness of God's near presence, how He drew from that nearness a vigour of moral perception not otherwise known to us, and an unconquerable strength of will. Only we must not fail to listen to the admonition which penetrates to our hearts in the fact of the Christian community and in the teaching it has handed down in Holy Scripture. Anyone who yearns for strength and freedom in his own inner life may well pay attention when earnest men tell him they have learnt

these in the New Testament from Jesus Himself and from men on whom He had laid His hand. It is this admonition which we have obeyed. Thus the idea of that spiritual Life which claims our entire self-surrender, the idea of our God, has been rendered far more full of meaning for us. In the conflict in which Jesus was engaged and in that courageous attitude to life which He aroused in His disciples, this idea comes near enough to us to be grasped. But along these lines we have discovered more still. If the personal life of Jesus captivates us by the wonderful capacity which His moral perfectness possesses of being intuitively perceived, then the confident trust which this Man maintained even unto death, grips us with the force of a tremendous fact. All who come to know Him and to experience His power over their spirits, must become freed thereby from the forces of inward corruption, and from all that makes them spiritless and miserable. On this trust which Jesus maintained our faith is reared.

Of course this will only be the case if Jesus has become to us in some sense a guide to higher things; if, that is, our courage has risen so high for His sake as to see in a spirit of goodness and righteousness the manifestation of the Power who is over all.

§ 6. *To such faith Scripture brings contact with the God we know, not a demand for acquiescence in statements we do not grasp.*

For us, then, faith is a personal conviction which is based within ourselves on experiences of our own, though we can neither convey it to, nor force it upon, anyone else by logical proof. The actual realities which we had to undergo, if we lived through them with earnest longing after the strengthening and freeing of our souls, allowed bright glimpses to penetrate to us of a Spirit in whom all after which we are struggling upwards is already perfectly realised as a living whole. The personality of Jesus has been the clearest information which

has reached us about this Spirit. If this is our position, then we see in the Holy Scriptures something quite different from what the Catholic sees in them. We look in Scripture for the revelation of a personal Spirit, who is known to us, but who remains to us unfathomable. Scripture attracts us because it promises us the fullest experience of that which makes us really alive, namely, contact with a personal Life which fills us with pure reverence and with profoundest confidence, and leads us by these to glad obedience. But Holy Scripture is never to us a law claiming from us anything so unreasonable as acquiescence in phrases we do not understand to be true. A Holy Scripture which made that claim upon us we should regard, not as a word of God, but as the voice of the tempter, who must not be allowed to get the better of us. Therefore it will not trouble us if we find in Holy Scripture much that is strange and unintelligible to us. Is any passage of that kind to be allowed to press upon us with the weight of a statute

law? Perhaps we should simply set it on one side. Perhaps it will be intelligible to us later on, if we do the one thing needful, *i.e.*, if we obey God who is revealing Himself to *us*. But let us have nothing to do with treating as true anything which we do not ourselves see to be true. We remember what name Jesus has applied to a divergence like this between a man's inmost heart and his outward conduct.

§ 7. *Whatever unites us with Roman Catholics, we must beware of Romanist faith, which blights individuals and nations.*

So, then, it is not of great importance if we do agree with the Catholics in the phrasing of some Christian doctrines. And, on the other hand, it is not of great importance that we differ from them in our conception of many Christian doctrines. Thank God, the variety among ourselves in this respect is sufficiently wide. The real thoughts of men who are religiously alive are not capable of being forced to wear any single uniform.

They may sound alike, but they will always remain different from one another. We are gloriously at one if, in the spiritual force which touches us in the Scriptures and, above all, in the person of Jesus, we have laid hold of that God who "is in secret." But the notions of Him in the minds of any two or three of us will be as various as were those of Paul and John and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Our reformers believed themselves to be linked to many earnest Roman Catholics by just such a living union. Nor will we let ourselves be deprived of that assurance. But we mean to have nothing in common with the 'faith' of the Romish Church. From our own experience we know this Romish faith to be a profound destruction of the soul, and we ask God to save us from it. No temptation is more dangerous to us than the temptation to attribute to ourselves thoughts which are really foreign to our minds. It allures us, because we should be helped, true enough, if we had a different inner life

—that is to say, different thoughts. But it is the undoing of us, because it is the opposite of thinking for ourselves, and this alone constitutes our way to God. But, further, it makes us guilty of the undoing of others; for a faith of that kind, owing to its arbitrariness and its inward instability, is all the more violent in the trouble it takes to make others like itself. What is repugnant to us in the Romish Church is not, in the first instance, *what is believed* there. We exercise patience for that even in bad instances, and take it good-humouredly, just as we do the belief of princes of the Romish Church in the strange fancies of Taxil.[1] But we are obliged

[1] Léo Taxil, pseudonym of a Parisian journalist who completely gulled clerical Europe with a stream of publications during twelve years from 22nd April 1885, when he pretended conversion, to 19th April 1897, when he lectured to journalists only on "Diana Vaughan." Papal bulls and letters had been increasingly bitter against Freemasons, Leo XIII. calling masonry the Kingdom of Satan on earth. Taxil, who had actually been a Mason a few months, and who was well informed in Jesuit doctrines of devilry, 'revealed' the worship of Satan and the obscene orgies of the inner circles of freemasonry. "Miss D. Vaughan"

to take up a different position with regard to the *way in which they believe.* For that is only one particular manifestation of the moral slumber which the Romish Church spreads abroad over the nations. What divides us from Rome is still the same to-day that Luther expressed in the words: "The papacy in Rome founded by the devil." We are no longer so coarse as Luther, and, besides, we do not deny that the popes were in former times the teachers and educators of the nations towards what was good. But for all that we see even more plainly to-day than Luther did, that the Romish Church is paralysing the moral conflict in individual men, and is contributing more by this means to the political

was one of his creations. The Pope and Cardinal Parocchi, and other ecclesiastics, delighted with this crushing exposure, wrote letters to her, the Cardinal's secretary assuring her he had "material and psychological proofs not only of her existence but of her honesty." Many of the 'revelations' were grotesquely and incredibly incredible. See two small pamphlets: Count P. von Hoensbroech, *Religion oder Aberglaube,* and especially H. C. Lea, *Léo Taxil, D. Vaughan et l'Église romaine; Histoire d'une Mystification.* Paris, 1901.]

and social decline of whole nations than by that frustration of intellectual culture which, in spite of the protests of our Catholic fellow-countrymen, she persists in cherishing and in regarding as one of the conditions of her existence.

§ 8. *For Romanist morals are the death of morality.*

We recognise, of course, that Roman Catholics are taught, not only among ourselves but in civilised lands generally, to reject murder, adultery, and thieving from their ordinary mode of life. That has to do with morality, but it would be going too far to say it *is* morality. It is worth a great deal to us that we can venture to think with cordial respect of Catholics who, as morally clear-sighted and earnest men, have an abundant life themselves and are a blessing to others.

But what the Church of Rome in its official capacity calls morality is the death of the

moral sense. It is much more important to make this fact clear than to give prominence to what the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches hold in common.

§ 9. *The points of contrast usually recognised between Protestant and Romanist morals.*

In any comparison of Christian with Roman Catholic morals, the following errors are, as a rule, brought into view. The Roman Catholic Church denies the religious and moral importance of a man's calling, and in consequence she urges men to duties arbitrarily chosen for them, while she conceals from them the fact that their duty is always indicated in the relationships which lie immediately about them. She denies the unlimited nature of duty, and in consequence she creates the delusion of works that have a moral value and that go beyond the measure of absolute duty. She breaks up the moral law into a whole series of separate requirements, and in consequence she gives birth to the delusion

that man is able of himself perfectly to fulfil the moral law. She destroys the oneness of moral life, for she lays down a twofold morality within the Christian community—one for the perfect and the other for the laity. But she also stands in the way of the oneness of moral life in individual Christians by preventing them from finding in their efforts faithfully to fulfil their calling the peace and stability of the man whom God sets free.

§ 10. *A far deeper distinction is covered by verbal agreement in one maxim.*

It is not without good reason that we think of these points first of all. For in these the contrast between the Catholic Church and ourselves is manifest on the surface. Moreover, the Reformers long ago pointed out the moral depravity which they involve. But in all this the profoundest flaw in the Catholic conception of ethics has not yet been clearly indicated. It will be plain to us only when we have recalled the great fundamental prin-

ciple which appears to unite us with the Church of Rome in the conception of morals. If we confine ourselves to the words, we are at one with them in asserting that the command of morality is the command of God.

§ 11. *Protestantism means by it that the moral law is a link with the love behind law, and the discovery brings joy and strength.*

For us this principle holds good all through. We have grounds for believing that by His moral requirement God means to draw us into participation in His own life, so that we may become in our inmost selves subject to Him. Just in proportion as this idea is established among us Christians, it frees us from the helplessness into which the moral law by itself ultimately leads us. If a man is left alone with his conscience and the performance of his moral obligations, he is either filled with sadness and unrest, or else he secures happiness by refusing to think. People who refuse to think we shall have, as

a rule, to leave to themselves till their own conscience compels them to think. Perhaps we should be able to bring such dead people to life if we were spiritually more alive ourselves. But we ought, at any rate, to join hands with those who are still fighting for their life, and over and over again to weigh the following considerations. If our conscience still tells us what we ought to do and to be, we are at the same time also aware that with all our efforts we can never—without faith in God—overcome either our ever-recurring uncertainty about what we ought to do or our sense of ever-increasing guilt. In such a condition a man is not happy. But for that very reason he has no strength to do right. He himself, of course, can discover no more than the truth that the cause of his unhappiness is that he does not do more. But on high, far above his grief, there is an entirely different judgment passed on his soul, namely, that he is without moral strength just because he is unhappy. He has lost his touch with

what alone can resolve our spiritual difficulty and make our heart glad. That is not the moral law, the idea of what is intrinsically good by itself, but the reality of the omnipotent good Will, our God. It is the beginning of a life more than that of the brutes when, by means of the command of morality, a man becomes aware that it is his meat to know himself united to the Eternal, and that it is his health to have a good conscience. But to a man once aroused to such a desire the world soon becomes intolerable, if he does not trace in it the omnipotence of a Will the purpose of whose life lies within the range of our own moral perceptions, and whose love belongs to that personal life a spark of which glows in us also. But if the comforting impression is made upon us that through all the transformations of actual existence an omnipotent Will for good moves along its path seeking us alike in our daily experiences and in the voice of the eternal law, then we have found God, the God who will create for

us the possibility of being morally earnest and yet at the same time happy. Do you ask how we arrive at that? There is only one way. It is by perceiving that which through Jesus Christ has come into the world with complete clearness. And yet there are ways innumerable, just as many as there are people. Each man has to observe in his own life the fact that this Will for good, while weak within himself, is yet omnipotent over him and full of marvellous grace.

§ 12. *Rome means it is God's, and therefore external to us; whereas the Ethical Society says it is our own, and therefore not God's at all.*

For us that is the meaning of the fundamental principle to which we referred.[1] The knowledge expressed by it creates for us the possibility of being able to live under the law. The Catholic Church, to all appearance, pos-

[1 *I.e.*, that the command of morality is God's command, § 11.]

sesses the same knowledge. She, too, teaches that the moral law is God's law. But does that mean the same to her as it does to us? If it did, we should stand shoulder to shoulder with her in opposition to people of the kind who meet in the Ethical Society.[1] That would unite us very closely with the Catholic Church. For while it is true that this society is not a very powerful opponent, yet that out of which it has grown is a monstrous, world-wide, corrupting force, viz., the incapacity of people to think for themselves about themselves. In spite of that we cannot in fighting against it unite with the Catholic Church. For it is not easy to say which of the two stands the nearer to the Gospel, that presumably non-religious representative of moral idealism, or this Church. On the one side you have an enthusiastic interpretation of the fundamental idea of the moral sentiment. That is to say, you have the thought, not that the law is God's command, but that the law

[1] [Gesellschaft für ethische Kultur.]

is true. On the other side, in the Catholic Church, you find her fervid religious devotion to the name of Jesus Christ. Which of these weighs the heavier? Perhaps we could not bring ourselves to answer that question. But yet there is one thing of which we must be sure. Jesus will Himself reject those who while they praise His name are trying to make void His holy law. But that is what the Catholic Church is doing; and she is doing it with the very conception which she holds of that fundamental principle in which she seems to agree with us. With her the idea that the command of morality is God's command implies that for that very reason it is no law of ours. But that implies that the religious idea is here so distorted that it comes to be a complete annihilation of the moral sentiment.

§ 13. *Two lines of proof: Jesuit 'truth' and 'Probabilism.'*

That is a serious accusation. But we can prove that it is correct by two examples; first,

by the attitude of the Catholic Church towards truthfulness, and, secondly, by what she calls the doctrine of 'Probabilism.'

§ 14. *Cathrein's 'Moral Philosophy' blames certain Protestants for allowing untruths in cases of necessity.*

The Jesuit Cathrein has recently produced a treatise on the philosophy of morals marked by great industry, and especially so in regard to his knowledge of the literature of his subject. We are justified in taking for granted that this book[1] accurately reflects the conception of ethics prevailing in the Church of Rome. That is vouched for by the Order which has approved the book and by the position of that Order in the Catholic Church of to-day. We are not concerned to deny that other theologians may differ from that book in particular points, or that Cathrein himself represents peculiarities on which he feels himself to be an original thinker. But so far as these are

[1] Compare Cathrein, *Moralphilosophie*, edit. 3; 1899.

concerned, it is always a question of small differences, in which a brilliant ingenuity may perhaps display itself, but which are of no importance to the distinction between Romanist and Protestant morals. In that book, then, truthfulness is defined as the will to speak as we think. Opposed to truthfulness, it says, is lying, *i.e.*, an utterance by which the man purposely places himself in contradiction to what he thinks. The writer then informs us that among Protestants there are many who would be prepared to defend lies, under certain definite conditions, as lies of necessity. Among the philosophers he names Paulsen, Wundt, and Ziegler; among the theologians the Lutherans, Martensen, and Harless. He blames these men severely for their lax principles with regard to lying. On the other hand, he boasts of the Catholics as having from time immemorial rejected every sort of lie, and praises Kant for his declaration that even to save the whole world we have no right to tell a lie.

§ 15. *His attack may be met, but he himself wrongly narrows his definition of truth to true words.*

Now all that sounds very much in earnest. But it is not an expression of moral earnestness or obedience. First, it is not correct to say that truthfulness is the will to *speak* as we think. That is only one very important way of evincing truthfulness in human intercourse. It is one duty which flows from truthfulness. But that this duty stands first in every case where we have to do with mankind is rightly contested by the authors whom the Jesuit blames. Cases can be imagined in which the strength of a man's moral sense will manifest itself precisely in the decision to use untrue speech. Just as a Christian may read in a particular situation into which God has led him the moral obligation resting on him to use force, so he may also find himself in situations in which he can remain morally free and pure only by deciding to utter untrue speech. Very frequently the attempt to speak

the truth even in such cases will issue in the speaker's all the more thorough deception of himself. He means to be truthful, and after all he is only the prudent person who holds it safer to obey a rule, although he is far from being convinced of the moral correctness of what it enjoins. The man who meets with a criminal on his way to commit his crime, the leading actor face to face with a crowd excited by the cry of fire—for both of these the circumstances may be so constituted that they can find only in untrue speech the help which they cannot but feel called upon to render. The man, therefore, who disdains to use these means will imagine that he is saving his soul, but he abandons to destruction alike the criminal and his victim, and the unhappy people in the theatre. Similar situations may occur in dealing with maniacs, but sometimes, too, with other sick people, and with children as well. When we have to deal with persons with whom we cannot and ought not for the moment to have full intellectual

fellowship, it will not always be morally possible for us to keep our words in unison with what we ourselves think. Very near to that admission, doubtless, lies the serious danger of our justifying ourselves by an appeal to practical results even in cases where untruthful speech is mere cowardice, that is to say, lack of trust in God, or unbelief. But our power of moral choice must just find a way of its own out of such dangers. At any rate, we must not conceal from ourselves that under certain definite circumstances the use of untrue speech is not only permitted, but may be our duty. Of course, the untrue speech must be accompanied by the purpose of removing the deception to the best of our ability, as soon as the possibility offers, just as we should remove anything of any kind that formed an intellectual or spiritual barrier between such persons and ourselves.[1]

[1 The following extract from *Ethik,* by Dr W. Herrmann (in *Grundriss der theologischen Wissenschaften,* Mohr),

§ 16. *But the wider duty of being true is systematically ignored by Rome.*

Nevertheless, the position which is taken up by the Jesuit I have referred to, and for

ed. 2, 1901, § 11, p. 34, will help to explain the author's position in many passages.

"The effect [of the moral law on a man's life] is a two-fold one. In the first place, in this way there is set up a sincere intellectual and spiritual fellowship between men. Whereas they are as much divided as they are united by their inclinations, they come into complete mental and spiritual unity only by all keeping before themselves the same unconditional commandment. In the second place, the individuals attain thereby a spiritual condition in which they are truly independent. Whoever can say to himself that he wills what he himself discerns to be eternally necessary, knows that by virtue of this will of his he has a part in the realisation of what is recognised by all reasonable beings as the final aim of all things. The consciousness of this union with the eternal cannot but render the man inwardly upright and make him independent. He knows that in that which he himself wants to be he can be opposed by no higher wisdom, that in willing this he can never become a mere means employed by others, and that all outward forces which threaten his existence with annihilation cannot extinguish his title to exist.

. . . . . .

"Mental and spiritual fellowship among men and mental and spiritual independence on the part of the individual—that is what we can ourselves recognise to be prescribed

which he appeals to Kant, will appear to be the stricter one in morals. But this apparent moral strictness in the matter of truth is moral want of clearness, as will perhaps be plain if we consider that truthfulness obviously implies far more than the duty of *speaking* the truth. All those who are blamed by the Jesuit are, it is true, of opinion that in cer-

to us by the moral law. Each of the two is a particular expression of what is morally good. We ought at every moment to make the rule of our conduct this: Thou shouldst throw thy whole being into the effort to attain the profoundest and most far-reaching fellowship with other men that is possible; and at the same time this also: Thou shouldst be inwardly independent, and in virtue of that truly alive. Both of these propositions go together. For only by willing what we ourselves recognise to be eternally the final aim of all things can we regard ourselves as independent beings, and so as free masters of the circumstances in which our existence is placed. On the other hand, the mental and spiritual fellowship which we are obliged to conceive of as the final aim is possible only among independent beings. For whoever lacks inward independence has nothing in him that he can give to others. In that case he may indeed, as a thing, serve as a means employed by others. He renders this service even without taking any notice of it. He means to exploit others and is being exploited by others. Fellowship with them he can have none."]

tain carefully defined circumstances untruthful speech is a duty. But they are at the same time of opinion that we ought to *be* truthful under all circumstances. But the Jesuit never gives a thought to this truthfulness which ought always to permeate a man. Therein appears the limitation of his moral system and of that of the Catholic Church as a whole. For the purpose of saving herself the Catholic Church acts as if there were no such thing as real truthfulness. For wherever men begin to grasp the duty of being truthful in the full and serious sense of the term, as a fundamental requirement of morality, there they cease to be Roman Catholic at heart.

§ 17. *Truthfulness is the readiness to recognise facts.*

Truthfulness is the readiness to recognise realities as such, and not to hide them from ourselves. But that implies living according to our own perceptions without regard to

consequences. That is the most important obligation resting on scientific inquirers. But just the same truthfulness in another form is required of every man. We must create no illusions for ourselves as to our own circumstances, but fearlessly and earnestly face facts as they are. Dreamers are but shadows of men. The men God wants, the men in whom beat the pulses of strength and life, are the truthful men, who are nourished on reality, which is to be found in the work and the word of God. Whoever wants to get rid of facts is turning his back on God, for the omnipotent God dwells in realities.

§ 18. *This is lacking in Rome's treatment of historical science, where we are similarly tempted.*

The unwillingness of the Jesuit to consent to truthfulness in this fuller sense is in thorough agreement with the fact that the Church of Rome can continue to exist only if she hinders science from being truthful. It

is true that she has come to an understanding with natural science. We have heard the longing only recently expressed in Roman Catholic circles for the "blessed fires at the stake" and for the dungeons of the Inquisition. But the speakers have scarcely been thinking of places for the students of nature. Just now it was the historians' turn. It is these that the Church of Rome would be glad to lock up, even though she does open her archives to them under authorised restrictions. In this uneasiness about historical research, we might easily feel as she does. We ourselves are under temptation to wish for limits to historical research. For Christianity has its foundations, not only in what is eternal, but also in events which once happened and which still live as an inextinguishable memory in our hearts. But we can overcome that temptation. For we know Christianity as a form of the spiritual life which develops with the times —a form, therefore, which changes. So, then, if historical criticism compels us to yield up

to her some specially precious elements of our traditional belief, we are able to believe that by a loss of that kind God means to make us richer. In that case we can believe that we shall only then rightly behold in its power the Unity on which all else depends. The Church of Rome, on the contrary, is undone if she concedes that general councils have ever erred or that popes have done so in decisions given *ex cathedrâ*. Therefore, she cannot admit a historical inquiry which honestly puts the question whether or not a particular event has taken place. She can make use only of those historians who allow themselves to be set the task of proving that some particular event did not so happen. But research which lets itself be so employed is no longer a science with an ethical code of honour, but an immoral play of ingenuity. Even Catholic scholars are feeling it. On that account it is inevitable that in their mind, and in that of all Catholics who are capable of sympathising with them in a conflict like this, the claims of the Church

of Rome should come into violent collision both with their moral duty and with the very existence of their science, the laws of each of which are as indestructible as ever the Church of Rome itself can be. In the long run, there is no room in the world for two things so opposed to one another as sincere historical research and the Church of Rome.

§ 19. *Rome's doctrine of faith obscures the moral instincts, as is seen in Gury's instructions in speaking the truth.*

If the Roman Catholic moralists will not recognise truthfulness in the full sense of the term, that is in complete accord with the relations just indicated between that Church and science. But the chief point is, that the Roman Catholic Church renounces truthfulness in order to save herself. It is true there is much earnest talk about the duty of not telling lies to others. But in all that, not a thought is bestowed upon the fact that, when a man tells lies to himself, he at last un-

consciously, but with his whole being, exerts on his surroundings the force of a great untruth. The reason why they do not give it a thought is, that for fear of endangering their own salvation they are unwilling to face the simple fundamental obligation of truthfulness. To assure themselves of salvation they consider it necessary to hold traditional doctrines as true, although the notions expressed in those doctrines are not their own notions. But if they mean to be saved at the expense of their conscience, then the fundamental conception of all moral sense, the very understanding of what a moral command in the widest sense is, must have already perished in them, or, at least, become obscured. The Roman Catholic Church sets zealously to work to suppress such an understanding in the persons she wishes to educate as Christians. We get a clear view of that fact if we let another Jesuit tell us how the duty of never using untrue speech—a duty set before us as an unconditional one—should be discharged by a Catholic Christian.

One of the most influential teachers of Catholic morals is the French Jesuit, J. P. Gury, who died in 1866. In one of his widely read volumes we read as follows (*Casus Conscientiae*, ed. 6, Paris, 1881; vol. i. pp. 183–4):—[1]

[1] It is as well to give the original Latin, as in a recent controversy on Jesuit morals in the *Westminster Gazette*, the Jesuit pretended that a distinguished Oxford theologian had mistaken the meaning from want of knowledge of Latin or of German! I give it from Gury, ed. 5, 1875, vol. i. pp. 182 f.:—"Casus II. Restrictio mentalis. Anna, cum adulterium commisisset, viro de hoc suspicanti et sciscitanti respondit prima vice se matrimonium non fregisse; secunda vice, cum jam a peccato fuisset absoluta, respondit: *Innocens sum a tali crimine.* Tandem tertia vice, adhuc instante viro, adulterium prorsus negavit dixitque: *Non commisi,* intelligendo adulterium tale quod tenear revelare; seu: Non commisi adulterium tibi revelandum. Hinc: Quaer: An damnanda Anna? Solutio 418. In triplici memorato casu, Anna a mendacio excusari potest. Etenim *in primo casu* dicere potuit se matrimonium non fregisse, siquidem adhuc substitit. *In secundo casu* potuit dicere se innocentem esse ab adulterii crimine, siquidem, peracta confessione, et recepta absolutione, ejus conscientia ab illo non amplius gravabatur, cum certitudinem moralem haberet illud sibi remissum fuisse. Imo potuit hoc asserere etiam cum juramento, juxta S. Lig. n. 162.—Less.—Salm.—Suar.—cum sententia communi. *In tertio casu* potuit etiam *probabiliter* negare

"Anna, who has been unfaithful to her marriage vow, answers her husband (who suspects it and questions her) the first time: that she has not broken their marriage relationship; the second time (after being absolved from the sin) she answers: 'I am not guilty of any crime of the kind.' Finally, the third time, as her husband presses her, she denies the adultery altogether, and says, 'I have not committed it'; meaning in her own mind, 'an act of adultery which I am bound to disclose.'

"Has Anna in any one of these cases acted wrongly?

"In all three cases Anna is to be acquitted of the charge of lying. For she could say the first time she had not broken their marriage relationship, because their marriage still

se adulterium commisisse intelligendo, ita ut peccatum marito revelare deberet; eodem modo quo reus potest dicere judici non legitime interroganti: *Crimen non commisi,* id est intelligendo se non commisisse ita ut teneatur illud ei manifestare. Sic ad haec omnia S. Lig. n. 162, cum aliis bene multis."]

remained intact. The second time she could say she was not guilty of the adultery, since, after confession made and absolution received, her conscience was no longer burdened by the adultery committed, she being morally certain that it was forgiven her. Indeed, she could even confirm this answer with an oath according to St Ligorius, according to Lessius and Salmeron and Suarez, according to the universal opinion. The third time, too, she might probably (according to a 'probable' opinion) deny that she had committed an act of adultery, thinking in her own mind: such an act as she would have been obliged to confess to her husband: exactly as an accused person may answer a judge who questions him in an illegal manner: 'I have not committed the crime,' while understanding by the words: 'such a crime as I should be obliged to confess.' In all these respects St Ligorius has expressed himself in the same sense along with very many others."

§ 20. *This sheds an unpleasant light on boasted Roman Catholic piety.*

These words of Gury's reveal the moral emptiness of the piety which is allowed to spread throughout his Church. From her certainty that she has received the forgiveness of her sin, the woman Anna deduces the right to deceive her husband. According to the Gospel, forgiveness means that moral courage is given back to the sinner by the wonderful experience that the Holy One is seeking him, the sinner. In this case, on the contrary, forgiveness means simply a remission of penalty, by which the sinner's position is changed, but not his heart. It is not to be wondered at that Anna draws from a 'forgiveness' of that kind courage for fresh sin. It is also remarkable that Gury calls the imagination that she has received such a remission of penalty 'moral certainty.' What is the meaning of the word 'moral' in that connection?

§ 21. *Did Cathrein tell a lie in saying Rome demanded absolute truthfulness of speech always?*

But, as we read that lesson on true speech and lying, the question forces itself upon us, whether Cathrein had not read his famous fellow-Jesuit's book which appeared in so many editions. The book is, of course, as well known to him as the fact that Gury may appeal for his conception of the matter to very distinguished comrades—above all, to St Alphonse, the founder of the Order of Redemptorists.[1] But then a curious suspicion arises in our minds. Cathrein has declared that it is our duty under all circumstances to utter true speech, a declaration which possessed the great advantage of producing an impression of special moral energy. He has also asserted that Catholics have from time immemorial rejected all kinds of untrue speaking as forbidden. At the same time, this man of moral strictness has expressed his indignation against

[1] See note, p. 187.

Protestants who pronounce untrue speaking to be, under certain well-defined circumstances, a duty. If, then, in spite of that, he knows this utterance of Gury's, and is aware how widely this way of thinking is current in the Romish Church, then it appears to us that only one possible opinion is left us: Has not the Catholic teacher of morals himself spoken untruth in all this, in order to lead ill-informed readers astray?[1]

§ 22. *No; for the 'truthfulness' he refers to is Rome's, and covers words only, and not the heart.*

But in that we should be doing Cathrein an injustice. It is true that not merely we ourselves, but many respectable Catholics, at least in Germany, will be unanimous in thinking that Gury has in those words of his offered an inducement to the most infamous lying. But

[1 See *The Spectator* for 13th June 1903 for an interesting review of "Du Mensonge proprement dit et du Droit à la Vérité," Paris, Blond et Cie., a defence of lies published by the authority of the 'Vicaire-général.']

it is far more interesting to note that it is by those very words that Gury is giving instructions for being, after a Catholic fashion, strictly truthful. In our judgment the woman Anna is horribly untruthful. In the judgment of Catholics she is blameless. This judgment of Catholics we must presuppose in Cathrein. The woman is making even honest efforts to fulfil that very duty of truthfulness which the learned Jesuit pronounced to be an unconditional one. She so chooses her words that she can set them down as the expression of actual realities. It is true she tries at the same time so to arrange them as once more to deceive the husband to whom she has already been false. But in that there is shown the kind of morality to which the Catholic Church trains men, and which it gets scholars like Cathrein to defend. The Catholic Christian is to take pains to perform certain definitely prescribed actions. If the action accords with the prescription, then he is free to look after his own private interests alongside of that to

the best of his ability. If a man has done enough to satisfy the claims of the command, he may do as he likes as regards the rest.

§ 23. *To say that the act counts and not the heart, would set the inner man against God's claim.*

Perhaps there are not a few among us Protestant Christians who answer to all this: "Why, that is quite right; we, too, think the same." Whoever acknowledges that to himself may say to himself, further, that his ideas are Catholic, but not those of Jesus. Let us remind ourselves once again in what sense the Church of Rome understands morality. The Catholic Christian is to obey laws by which particular actions are prescribed to him. If he so acts, he has satisfied the requirements of morality, and for the rest he can do as he likes. That is false. For, in the first place, the command is thus felt to be a burden and a limitation. In that case the man's heart is not occupied with what the law requires, but with what is left for himself. Assuredly it cannot

be said of a man like that that he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, or that it is his meat to do the will of God. He has nothing to do with Jesus Christ.[1]

§ 24. *Secondly, it would emphasise the form instead of the substance of each command.*

In the second place, the real substance of the command of morality is not thought of at all. How different it is with the words of Jesus! He takes incessant pains to make clear to men that the command by which the merit or demerit of a man is determined requires something far more comprehensive than particular actions. The commands which Jesus addresses to all His disciples are always directed to that which is most inward in men, to that which must affect all particular actions, to the moral sense. It is a complete misunderstanding of these commands to suppose that

[1 Matt. v. 6: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." John iv. 34: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."]

they can be fulfilled in particular moments. For they claim the whole man always. Jesus sums up all that is required of us in the command of love to God and to our neighbour. However often we may have thought over this commandment, which means life or death for us, we still perhaps confess to ourselves that we have not yet fully fathomed its thought. But, at any rate, it does not merely tell a man how he is to act at particular moments, but what he is to be always. Nor is it difficult to grasp what it is that, according to this law, we are to be. To find real delight in this alone, that God, whom we have come to know, should rule in us, and that we should be united to our neighbour—that is the form of the inner life which this law requires. But if a man fulfils that condition, then to him the command is no longer the barrier, on the far side of which would lie his independence, the free scope he wants for his own interests. For there is nothing dearer to his own heart than that God should rule in him, and that his

being should be intertwined with that of his neighbour. The Catholic Church, while she cannot altogether evade this command, yet does not allow it to stand for what it is, for *the* law.[1]

§ 25. *Thirdly, it leads to equivocations which ruin a man's relations with his neighbour.*

In the third place, and lastly, a man who thinks only of laws which prescribe particular actions will always end by acting like that Catholicly correct woman Anna. He will say to himself, for example: In every case where you utter anything, you are to speak exactly as you think, and with your words you are to express actual facts. But, at the same time, he will always make the attempt to come to terms with the command in the way most convenient to himself. So, when it is important to him that a person who asks, and has a right to ask him, shall not learn a certain fact, he will be at pains to give his

[1 Compare note, p. 128.]

answer in such a shape that, while it is not absolutely false, it yet may, or must, be falsely understood by the questioner. We are all well acquainted from our own experience with that or some similar conduct. But we call it not morality, as the Church of Rome does, but sin. Between thee and thy neighbour all must be transparent. We ought to perceive the moral necessity of that maxim, and to attune our words to it. The Catholic, on the contrary, is allowed to speak truth like the woman Anna—that is to say, in such a way as to feel himself safe so far as the commandment goes, and yet to afford his neighbour the opportunity of deceiving himself.

§ 26. *Such morals set a premium on sharpness and insincerity instead of on inward purity.*

Anyone who has a head on his shoulders will not find it excessively difficult to fulfil the Catholic requirement of truthfulness and yet at the same time to deceive others. Of course the man who is specially ingenious in

equivocations will come off best. According to this conception of morality such a man can remain morally unimpeachable, while another who has the same disposition, but is somewhat less clever, will, before these judges, be held sinful for his fault. They know the command of morality as a limitation which someone else has imposed upon them, and which they, if they would travel safely, are bound to respect. But they do not know it as their own perception on which they ought to take their stand, and to take one's stand on which makes one inwardly clear-sighted and pure. And of another thing this Church knows just as little; and that is, that a man behaves morally only by obeying, without any reservations, whatever he himself recognises as unconditionally right. What Rome calls moral obedience is giving way before a power which can, it is true, exert compulsion on beings spiritually unstable, but can never convince a *man*. Such an obedience is not a *true* and sincere obedience. This

reason alone, then, is enough to prevent Catholic morality from grasping the notion of truthfulness. It is itself untrue.

§ 27. *The chief point in Gury is not the bad advice but the theory of morals it rests on.*

It is possible indeed, or actually certain, that many of our Catholic fellow-countrymen do not approve of the way in which the woman Anna acts. Perhaps even Cathrein himself is secretly indignant at his fellow-Jesuit, who can openly call such an action blameless. But the worst thing about the woman is not the way in which she deceives her husband. The worst thing is rather the moral standard for the sake of which she takes such pains—the Roman Catholic standard of morality.

§ 28. *That theory requires no perception of the justice of moral principle, and no virtuous disposition.*

She means to act rightly by fulfilling a

rule on which, as she thinks, her salvation depends. That is a Catholic view. But real morality consists in evincing by our actions the inward disposition of love to our neighbour—that is, in fulfilling a command the justice of which we have seen for ourselves. There is no trace of this inward disposition in the way in which the woman acts, since she thinks only of herself. She utterly deceives herself as to the fact that she is undone morally if she does not make it her endeavour to maintain between herself and her husband (who to her is her neighbour) a cordial fellowship, and therefore that, above all, everything shall be transparent between them. But truthful behaviour arising out of her own moral perceptions, or her own moral sense, is, on the Roman Catholic theory, not necessary. The Church itself releases men from this really moral duty. For it looks for moral goodness in an act the moral necessity of which the man does not perceive for himself—in which, that is to say, it is

not *his own* moral sense that expresses itself. But such an action is a sin.

§ 29. *The result is to do away with conscience.*

It might well be wished that the results of this corrupt morality had not as yet become clear to the Roman Catholic Church. It would then be possible to hope for her conversion, if it were once made evident to this degenerate branch of Christianity what comes of giving up the moral command the justice of which we see for ourselves. We gladly take for granted that Catholic Christians do not wish to be devoid of conscience. Such persons could surely be brought to see that if a man will not hold himself bound to obey whatever is clear to himself as being of unconditional necessity, the result is the annihilation of conscience. The sense of horror in the Roman Catholic Church at a spiritual void of this kind would inevitably become

a peremptory stimulus to the reform of that Church.

§ 30. *Rome recognises that result, and provides her 'Probabilism' to meet it.*

The Roman Catholic Church has precluded that. She has recognised very clearly that a man whose morality accords with her teaching reaches a condition of spiritual dependence. But for the loss of conscience which results from that, she has found room in her Christianity. This astounding outcome of her morality the Roman Catholic Church has shown to be a fact by the theory to which she gives the name of 'Probabilism.'[1]

[1 On Probabilism see Pascal's *Provincial Letters* (1656–1657), especially Letter V. (M'Crie's trans.: Edinburgh, 1851, pp. 116–131). And, on the Jesuit side, Cathrein, *Moralphilosophie,* Freiburg, 1890, vol. i. p. 353, where a distinction is drawn between Tutiorists, Probabiliorists, Aequiprobabilists, and Probabilists, who, in case of a doubtful rule of the Church, advocate its neglect, if the opposite view admits of certain various degrees of uncertainty or probability. His fundamental maxims are: "Lex non promulgata non obligat" and "Lex dubia non obligat."]

§ 31. *The early error of restricting morals to outward acts was rejected at the Reformation, but approved by Rome.*

Even from the second century onwards in the Christian Church the error is to be detected that the moral law does not apply to the inward disposition, or does not lay claim to the whole man, but only prescribes individual actions. Wherever this error prevails, there is, of course, no recognition of the truth that each individual must recognise for himself the unconditional necessity of what is commanded him in morality. For we can perform individual actions without understanding the justice of the command that requires them. But, on the other hand, if the command of morality is to be an expression of our own moral sense, then we must obviously have an insight into the rightness of that commandment. This understanding of the absolute justice of what is enjoined by morality we call conscience. In the Church, which takes the name of Him who made the conscience free,

there has existed from primitive times the danger of a man's suppressing his own conscience on the supposition that only individual actions are enjoined on him, in the performance of which the conscience does not come into the question at all. As soon as this danger was recognised, either this false representation of the command of morality had to be supplanted by the true one, which was there in the New Testament, or else the decision had to be made to approve this suppression of the conscience. The Reformation did the former; the Roman Catholic Church did the latter. And Probabilism, above all else, has served as her instrument for this end.

§ 32. *Cases where conscience deliberates Rome calls 'doubtful,' and teaches men in these to disobey conscience.*

For us it goes without saying that a moral determination is the translation of our own moral sense into act under special circum-

stances. We arrive at such a determination always after the more or less severe effort of considering how in this definite case the unchangeable content of our moral sense is to be adhered to and to be carried into action. Wherever the Roman Catholic Church leads men, all this is altered. It is at this point that she exhibits her great skill in making the simplest things complicated and the clearest obscure. What she says is that there are doubtful cases in which a man does not need to follow his own moral discernment or his conscience. Now, it is evident that all cases which admit of a moral determination remain doubtful as long as that moral act of considering has not come to an end. A hesitation of this kind fails to occur only when the case in question has been solved for us by previous decisions. But every moral determination which involves progress on our part moves through similar moments of an uncertainty from which we have to make an effort to free ourselves. Sometimes our act of determina-

tion will not be quite free from a certain doubt whether we did not give too little weight to considerations which pointed in a different direction. But still the decision can be given only by our own moral sense and by the moral discernment which we have fought for and acquired. Both of these are heard in the voice of our conscience. It is by that that we have to be guided. If we make a mistake in the means we take to give actual expression to the right moral sense, even then we have fulfilled the law. For we have acted according to our best knowledge and conscience.

§ 33. *Instead they may follow their confessor or any one notable Church teacher they may find convenient.*

Whoever thinks of this subject must see that in those innocent-looking words[1] the Roman Catholic Church offers a most objectionable piece of advice. What she says

[1] See above, § 32: "There are doubtful cases in which a man does not need to follow his own moral discernment."

amounts to this, that in each fresh moral decision, by which we ought to make spiritual growth, we do not need to follow our own moral perceptions. The question, then, naturally arises by what the Christian ought to direct his steps in doubtful cases, which means at bottom in every moral decision. The answer runs: By the judgment of his father confessor, but also by the judgment of other teachers of note pronounced on similar cases. Now, of course, the effect of these judgments of ecclesiastical teachers often differs very widely. So one might think that this advice might possibly only increase the perplexities of a man who was trying to find his way. But the Catholic Church knows a plan to meet that difficulty; for she tells her Christians they are at liberty to seek out for themselves the decision they find most convenient. They have only to be guided by some defensible opinion (*opinio probabilis*)—that is, by one which is defended at least by some one ecclesiastical teacher of note. Jesuit theo-

logians, therefore, of the highest repute see the will of divine providence shining out from the multifariousness of the views of ecclesiastical teachers to make the yoke of Christ pleasantly light to the Christian. It is certainly a great lightening of it for every man who wants to escape from his own conscience, or to be unconscientious. For to the Catholic Christian his Church expressly gives the right to be at liberty to follow the judgment of one ecclesiastical teacher of note, even when, according to his own moral judgment, he holds the opposite view to be more correct, and knows as well that other ecclesiastical teachers are equally to be found defending that opposite view.

§ 34. *Restriction to 'doubtful cases' does not alter the practical fact of advice given to disobey conscience.*

It is indeed always added that it is only in doubtful cases that the Christian may proceed on these lines. But, then, is not every earnest

decision, in which a man advances beyond his earlier attainments of moral insight and strength, won through conflict with many doubts? And in any case does not the fact remain that the Catholic Christian is *invited* by his Church to act contrary to his own moral discernment? It is not merely that in certain of the Church's members loss of conscientiousness is developed out of principles of hers that they have perverted, but the point is that the Church herself places herself with all her authority at the head of that development. She gives the invitation to unconscientiousness.

§ 35. *Many Protestants hold the theory of morals which leads to this astounding immorality.*

It is a most remarkable phenomenon that a Church which claims to be founded by Christ, and which heaps all honours on His name, should come to such an end as this. It seems inconceivable that men should

honour Jesus Christ and at the same time should be able to kindle themselves to enthusiasm for such an immoral, and therefore godless, piety. But many Protestant Christians as well will not regard the beginning of this end as anything evil, but will, with a light heart, become parties to it. That beginning is, in fact, to be sought in the way they understand the idea that the command of morality is God's command. The Church of Rome thinks—and I suspect many Protestant Christians think so too—that partly in the fundamental characteristics of our human nature, partly in special revelations by speech and writing, God has given us laws which we are not at liberty to infringe; that in loyally endeavouring to keep these commandments moral goodness consists. But Jesus required of His disciples another righteousness[1] (Matt. v. 20).

[1 Matt. v. 20: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."]

§ 36. *The Reformers distinguished between 'civil' and 'spiritual' righteousness.*

To obey laws which have been imposed upon us we hold, indeed, to be very necessary. But if we are acquainted with no other righteousness than that, we do not know what moral goodness is. The State, as is well known, requires of its citizens an obedience of that kind. It is an immoral act, speaking generally, to refuse it; but to perform it comes short of making a man moral. We must be able to distinguish between morality and conformity to law. Roman Catholic Christianity cannot draw this distinction. Beginnings in the direction of this distinction existed in profusion even before the Reformation. The Reformers carried these beginnings further by distinguishing between 'civil' and 'spiritual' righteousness. For by the latter term they understood heart righteousness, the real moral goodness, in the possession of

which man is united with God[1] (Matt. v. 44, 45).

§ 37. *Rome conceives of morality as obedience to law in a theocratic state; but State law cannot be supreme in conscience.*

But, in opposition to the Reformers, the Roman Catholic Church has exalted to the position of a fundamental principle that very imperfection of view which the Middle Ages was labouring to overcome. She understands by morality obedience to law in a theocracy. Thus, while Catholics, like ourselves, speak of God's commands, yet their attitude to those laws is like that of citizens to the law of their country. But if that is once conceded, then even Probabilism, which is unconscientiousness based on principle, seems completely free from objection. For the law of a State (speaking

[1 Matt. v. 44, 45: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."]

generally, any law that has only been imposed on me by another) is not supreme in my conscience. I am urged by my conscience in a general sense to obey the State; but I do not act unconscientiously if I assert my spiritual independence as against individual laws of the State, or if I try to come to a compromise with those laws as far as I can. I never dream of risking my whole existence for the extension of these particular ordinances throughout the world.

§ 38. *This treatment of God's law ignores the Sermon on the Mount, as Cathrein proves.*

Now this is exactly the attitude which the Roman Catholic Church adopts towards the moral law as well, and by that she shows us that she does not yet know what is meant by moral law or a moral sense. She is called a Christian Church. But she keeps both herself and the nations, whom she previously educated and has now laid in chains, firmly fixed at a pre-Christian stage of moral and social progress.

As far as she is concerned, the Sermon on the Mount was never uttered. The notion entertained within her of man's attitude to the moral law is betrayed by Cathrein in the following words: "Man is by himself alone the master of his own actions; freedom of self-determination has been conferred on him by God. Any limit which anyone wants to set to that freedom, or, what is the same thing, any law which anyone wants to impose on him, must be supported by positive proof. So long as that proof is not produced, a man may move freely."[1] He is of opinion that even Probabilism is justified by these propositions, the correctness of which seems to him to stand beyond all doubt. For our part we have no desire whatever to combat that view If man is really so related to the moral law as is there stated, then that unconscientiousness based on principle, to which the Church

[1] Cathrein, *op. cit.*, i. 368. In the third edition this sentence is wanting; but the representation contained in it of the relations between law and freedom controls his whole treatment of the subject.

of Rome relinquishes herself by her doctrine of Probabilism, is morally correct.

§ 39. *And treats divine law as an unwelcome limitation put upon our natural freedom.*

In his own words the command of morality is expressly termed a limit set to the freedom of man. The orders of the police have a similar significance for us. If the citizen respects those limits, he can serve his own private interests in everything besides. His civil freedom will be the greater in proportion as it is the less narrowed by police regulations. To enjoy this freedom from the law is the citizen's cherished right. That is all plain sailing. So far, we are assured that we are at one with the Roman Catholic citizens of this country. But now that relationship between the law and a man's freedom is carried over by the Roman Catholic Church into the moral sphere as well. According to her, the man is to feel himself free as regards whatever is not definitely specified by the

moral law. He ought, that is to say, to have a right in certain definite respects to enjoy his freedom from the moral law as well. But in that case this law is evidently no more the expression of his own moral sense than is the State law. Then he regards even the moral law as a chain laid upon him, which he bears because he must, but which he would rather not bear. But whoever adopts that attitude to the moral law cannot be, in the Christian sense of the word, religious.

§ 40. *Reluctant obedience passes for morality with Rome; but we call it sin.*

The Catholic Christian who allows himself to be firmly held by his Church to this position of moral immaturity finds himself perpetually in inward opposition to God. For what he himself wishes to be is always something different from real goodness, since he feels the command of morality to be a limitation of his freedom. We, too, are acquainted with this feeling, but we call it sin. The Roman

Catholic Church, on the contrary, calls it morality, when a man so submits himself to the command of morality as to want to draw a distinction between the act of submission and the assertion and use of his liberty.

§ 41. *Probabilism is an apt defence of 'freedom' against duties inculcated by conscience with increasing clearness.*

To a 'morality' like this it must of course be incomprehensible how Probabilism can be regarded as anything else than an invaluable assistance in the moral conflict.[1] For if we have a right to regard the moral command as a chain and a limit upon our freedom, then we have also a right to defend our freedom against this compulsion. And Probabilism is a very apt instrument of self-defence against

[1] Cathrein (*op. cit.*, i. 369) expresses none too elegantly his indignation at the misconception of Probabilism. "That is the whole secret of Probabilism, which has been so howled at, and which since the days of Pascal, that great calumniator of the Jesuits, has so often had to do duty against them as a bugbear."

the command of morality. The Church of Rome maintains this defence of freedom against the requirements of morality under the legal axiom: A doubtful law, *i.e.*, one not clearly pronounced, does not bind us. That is to say, this case of a doubtful law is always to present itself whenever important considerations argue against a duty which is beginning to be clear to us. We need not waste time over the disgraceful fact that the decisions of ecclesiastical teachers of note are named among reasons of importance, such as may absolve us of a duty which is becoming clear to ourselves. The chief point is that the bare existence of doubts accompanying our moral judgment is to give us the right not to obey our own ethical perceptions. Although in our estimate of probabilities these perceptions assert themselves in opposition to the doubts, yet we are to be justified in not obeying the demand of duty which arises out of them, but acting upon our 'liberty,' that is, our appetite (*cf.* p. 298).

§ 42. *The error arises from regarding moral law as imposed from without only, and not by our own moral judgment.*

All that is right, if the command of morality, while it is God's command, is not at the same time the law which we ourselves set ourselves. In passing judgment on such a command and its requirements no other standards than legal ones are necessary, and it is legally unimpeachable if in defence of our liberty against such a command we fall back upon the principle of law that any limit we are to acknowledge must be laid down by a declaration entirely free from doubt. Even our own suspicion that God may possibly have laid down this limit does not alter the case in the least. For, as Romanist theologians plead in this legal battle between man and the law of God, God gave us our freedom too. That indubitable fact is not to be set aside by a notion not free from doubts, that God *has* imposed upon us the particular limitation which at the moment seems to oppose our wishes. Therefore we

are at liberty to get rid of this idea, so soon as weighty doubts arise against it, and to follow our own wishes. We may do that even when it appears to us more probable that God may indeed have imposed on us the duty about which we have our doubts. It is thus the Roman Catholic Church argues, and quite rightly too, if the rule holds good that the moral command is imposed on us by God, *and therefore from without.* But we need no proof that it is thoroughly immoral to be ready to be turned about in such a fashion in regard to a requirement the rightness of which is supported by our own moral perceptions.

§ 43. *The outcome of Probabilism therefore disproves Rome's sense of the maxim "Moral law is God's law."*

So, then, the idea out of which a usage like this has grown must be false, the idea that the moral command has been given us by God *and therefore from without—i.e.,* not by means of our own perceptions. From the

moral impurity in which such arts as Probabilism flourish, we escape only when it becomes clear to us that the command of morality cannot be given us from without at all. Whatever is imposed on us like that, binds us only outwardly. The command of morality, on the contrary, which lays claim to our heart of hearts, to ourselves, must present itself to us as the expression of our own moral sense, of our own independent perceptions. The beginning of real morality, therefore, lies for every man in his beginning to live freely on his own initiative; that is, not to follow the desires which enslave him, but to obey what he himself recognises as unconditionally necessary; in other words, as good. Before his Judge no one will deliver him if he refuses obedience to his own moral judgment, as the Roman Catholic Church allows him to do. In the comfortable bondage which in the Church of Rome passes for morality, he is in the service of evil. For a man serves the good only when with unhesitating sincerity

he follows what he himself recognises as absolutely necessary, that is, as good. The free personality independent in its moral perception is good. Nothing else is.

§ 44. *Rome's acceptation of it rests on a false idea of God, which vitiates her boasted piety.*

Against these principles the Roman Catholic Church calls into the field her piety. If we call what our own perceptions prescribe to us, the only moral command given us, then she reproaches us with the impossibility of our being any longer Christians, because we give up the fundamental principle that the command of morality is God's command. If we affirm the existence of an immoral piety in the Church of Rome, she discovers among us a godless morality. But a Christian whose thoughts turn to his God will not let himself be frightened by that. The moral command, of course, *is* God's command. But our God does not give us His orders like a policeman, but as the Father and Lord of Spirits. For

that reason His command does not present itself to us as something foreign. It is so given to us as to constrain us in our inmost being. But it does so only if we ourselves understand the truth of it: that is to say, if our own sense of perception compels us to prescribe it to ourselves. So long as we fancy that when we are confronted by ordinances of God we may have, and may assert, a certain independence, we have before our eyes, not the omnipotent God but an idol. So if the morality of the Roman Catholic Church is immoral, her piety is also godless.

§ 45. *Jesus met this very error in Pharisaism.*

Jesus knew this way of thinking, but He fought against it as "the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." He wished to lead His disciples out from the service of unintelligible rules, and to set them on their own feet. He saw that obedience of the former sort is a huge self-deception on the part of any man to whom obeying comes easy, and to whom

nothing is harder than to be really alive. To the servant of rules, who thinks he has fulfilled all God's commands, He says that he can become perfect only by a determination prescribed to him in no rule.[1] But Jesus did not mean by that, as the Catholic exposition has it, that in order to be perfect a man must do something more than the command of morality requires of him. The perfection of a man, according to Jesus' teaching, consists in the simple fulfilment of the command of morality (*cf.* Matt. v. 48[2]). The view of Jesus, then, is *that a man does not fulfil the moral command of God till he imposes on himself something which he does not find written in any rules.*

§ 46. *He gives no code of rules, but leads us to free moral convictions.*

Jesus is not of the opinion that we are already acting rightly when we are willing to

[1] Mark x. 17–22 = Matt. xix. 16–22 = Luke xviii. 18–23.]

[2] Matt. v. 48: "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."]

fulfil the commands of another, nor even when we think we have received the commands of Jesus Himself. Therefore He has given us no commandments at all that can be obeyed without further consideration. What sounds like a command on His lips is always only a stimulus urging on the disciples to make clear to themselves what they ought to do. For Jesus knew that a man is truly alive and spiritually united to God only when he acts from his own free conviction, that is to say, when he is true, and does not act a part.

§ 47. *There may be a blind obedience resulting from trust in God, whom we know, but not blind obedience to mere external precepts.*

Certainly Jesus did also require blind obedience, and practised it; for instance, in His patient and cheerful submission to the lot appointed Him by God. We render blind obedience to God, if we hold fast to the truth that it is just from the circumstances in which we are at this present time placed that eternal

life is to spring for us. Such blind obedience we have to practise every day, not allowing ourselves to be dragged down by our distresses and worries, but holding by the conviction that they were meant to lift us upwards. But we can achieve that only if the spiritual Power has revealed itself to us, filling us with complete confidence; that is to say, if we have found God.

§ 48. *But trust in God, whom we know, implies the possession of independent moral convictions.*

We must know God as the only one who has a right to be supreme and to claim our confidence, if we are to render Him a blind obedience. We can indeed make up our mind to believe what others say about Him. But to know Him Himself as the Lord over all, or as the spiritual Power which constrains us to complete trust, is given to that man only who himself knows what is really good. For it is only a man possessed of such independence who is capable of the movement of soul in

which we can be conscious of the nearness of God, of complete spiritual submission. Whoever is not able to say to himself what is unconditionally necessary and eternal, or good, remains in his heart of hearts hard and impervious. For him there is no revelation of God, because it is an experience of complete submission. So only the man who in his moral perceptions is independent can experience God's revelation of Himself to him, because he alone can bow to Him in an obedience without reservation.

§ 49. *Faith is consistent with independence of moral judgment, for Jesus taught His disciples both at once.*

Among the Reformers, therefore, the two things stand side by side, a trust in God (which is taken to be the whole of religion) and the independent conscience, the consciousness of knowing for oneself what values are to rank as eternal. But in this they were re-discovering what Jesus had imparted to

His disciples. Christians ought to be above the convenient, but also anxious and unsafe, religion which consists in being occupied with other people's ideas, getting accustomed to them, or turning them into laws. Those whom Jesus attaches to Himself get in His personality the fact which becomes the most powerful revelation of God to themselves, and which opens their eyes to other facts in which God comes near to them. But they get that experience only by becoming partakers of the moral sense of Jesus. Otherwise they can neither understand Him nor perceive His greatness. Nor can they otherwise experience His revelation of God in such a way as to make God supreme within them. But what is meant by partaking of the moral sense of Jesus is to be seen most plainly by the requirements which Jesus makes of His disciples. All these commands of His can be obeyed only by a man of whose own volition they are the expression : obeyed, that is, not outwardly, or with a blind obedience, but freely and from an

inward motive. Before all else they require of us the single duty of being independent men, constrained in our inmost souls by our own moral perceptions.

§ 50. *Christ's requirements cannot be fulfilled by external acts alone;* e.g., *that of turning the other cheek.*

To give up entirely the struggle for honour among men; to be ready for unlimited acts of forgiveness for all vileness; to renounce all revenge, even showing oneself willing to suffer further insults from the insulter—he, it seems, is no Christian who is not *able* for that. To love one's neighbour as oneself—that is to say, to set all one's hope in life on attaining hearty and spiritual fellowship with the persons whom circumstances have placed near us—he is no Christian who does not *do* that. But if we examine for ourselves this series of requirements made by Jesus, the first thing which strikes us is that they can be fulfilled only by one who has them living in his heart

as the object of his own will. If, for instance, Jesus had required nothing more than that, on being struck by a malicious person, you should declare yourself ready to receive further blows, of course that would be easily fulfilled. A person who imagines he can earn salvation by such conduct will not find it so very hard to allow that, or any other dirt, to stick to him. But by that command[1] Jesus asks for something quite different. You may easily allow yourself to be repeatedly struck and yet be all the time bitterly resenting it and wishing evil to the offender. But we are not to let ourselves be drawn into opposition to the offender. The Christian is to stand to such an evildoer in a relation of spiritual freedom; he is not to allow himself to be forced by him into a longing for revenge, but he is to feel himself so united to him as to be ready even to suffer still further at his hands. What

[1 Matt. v. 39: "Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." *Cf.* Luke vi. 29.]

Jesus requires is not the weakness of a person who sets no value on himself, but the highest superiority and strength. But this superiority of goodness towards an offender can evidently be evinced only by a man to whom the moral necessity for such behaviour has been so disclosed that his moral sense is filled with it. The will so to act must arise in himself; that is, he must be subject in his inmost soul to what the command requires. It is just the same with all Jesus' other requirements. But there is yet another thing which strikes us in them. The reason why they require listeners possessed of moral independence is that they leave it to us to distinguish between what ought to be done always and what is required of an individual in certain definite circumstances only. We ought always to be filled with the disposition out of which springs readiness of mind to bear further indignities from the offender. On the other hand, we are by no means to exhibit that readiness in every case. Without doubt we are not to

exhibit it when it would not be an expression of love to our neighbour (which is an exhibition of strength), but weakness or outward obedience to a mere rule. But this distinction is not indicated by a single word in that requirement of Jesus. And yet it is certain that He who fought against nothing so vehemently as the divided state of mind of insincere men, never wished to entice others by words of His into a mere external doing. So, then, in His saying about the right and left cheeks He counted on men who were already fully developed in moral independence, and who could therefore distinguish between the disposition unconditionally required of them, and a certain expression of that disposition which can be required only under definite conditions. Open as it is to that misunderstanding, this saying, like many others, is dropped with manifest unconcern into the movement which in history took its rise from Jesus. To us it is a proof that God wills that we should fight our own way to moral

independence. We are to submit ourselves completely to the power of Jesus' personality. But if we really do so, we shall observe that He repels us if we wish to submit ourselves to Him without following our own convictions. For He wants to win His own disciples to Himself by training them to be inwardly stable, really earnest—in other words, free men.

§ 51. *Spiritual union with Jesus brings liberty, independence, and a sense of wealth, which produce glad service of others.*

On the one hand, Jesus utters with wonderful impressiveness the truth that to know Him and to become spiritually united to Him is emancipation for a man. But in His whole person there speaks quietly but powerfully the intense purpose that with Him those only should go who let themselves be trained to become independent beings, that is, personalities. In His view it is the independent free man alone who is won for God, the man

who has become so rich and strong and free that he desires for himself nothing better than *to serve*. This force, bursting up from the seed that Jesus sowed, is the true beginning of salvation in a man. But really to live for others, or really to serve, is possible to us only when the hope that we have received enough to last for eternity is continually burying all our anxieties out of sight. That hope flows into the heart of those who are united to Jesus Christ. We do not fail to note that He is the conqueror.

§ 52. *Souls lacking this independence Christ may receive and lead on, but what of a Church which for selfish ends rejects it?*

Jesus did not turn away those who were under age. Therefore He would not judge harshly all the Christians who accept His sayings, and other sayings in the Bible, as rules which they would like to follow without understanding the truth of them. But He would inexorably reject a Church which for

the sake of maintaining its own position wants to keep men firmly fixed at that stage of moral immaturity. It is natural and excusable for childishly immature persons not to perceive as yet in God's commands the requirements of spiritual independence, or truthfulness. But when they outgrow this stage, they receive the divine impulse to put away childish things. If they obey God, they put away, if not the whole of Catholicism, yet certainly the Catholic conception of morals.

§ 53. *The revolt distinguishable in Catholicism affords little hope of its return as a Church to Christ.*

That such a development is in process in Catholic Christendom is made evident by such men as Alban Stolz,[1] or as Rosegger

[1 Alban Stolz, born 1808, died 16th October 1883. Professor of Pastoral Theology (R.C.) at Freiburg 1848–1880. Collected works, Freiburg, 1871–77. Author of an annual religious calendar, "For Time and Eternity," widely disseminated in his district, from 1843 onwards. Works, 19 vols., Freiburg, 1871, etc. Life, 3 vols., 1889.]

and his peasants.[1] It is proved, too, by many excellent things said in Cathrein's *Moral Philosophy*. But we are scarcely at liberty to allow ourselves the hope that the Roman Catholic Church can work itself free from its moral slough, and find its way back to Christ.

§ 54. *For Liguori's morality has been bound upon that Church by 'infallible' popes.*

She is prevented from doing that by the inheritance bequeathed to her by Pius the Ninth. The popes are now, in their quality of teachers of the Church, infallible. That pope, an exceedingly weak man as regards Christian sagacity, nominated Liguori[2] (the

[1 Petri Kettenfeier Rosegger, an Austrian author of very many short stories and poems exhibiting peasant life in the Styrian Alps. Thirty vols. of select works from his poems and stories were published in Vienna 1881–1894. Two, "The Forest Schoolmaster" and "The God-Seeker," are translated (Putnams, 1901), the former prefaced with a very brief autobiography. He is now a Protestant.]

[2 Alphonse Liguori, born 1696, died 1787, of noble family; educated at Oratory of S. Philip de Neri, Naples. Brilliant advocate; lost a case by sheer carelessness in 1725, and the distress drove him to a monastery; he was

founder of the Redemptorist Order, who had already been canonised) to be a "Teacher of the Church Universal," and by that nomination he pronounced the conception of morality represented by him and his Order and culminating in Probabilism to be the model conception. That has now become the door which shuts Romanist Christianity into its Inferno. Nevertheless it would be burst open if the remnant of Christian character in that Church were to gather its strength for a reformation from within.

§ 55. *To help such a revolt we too must be free from Romanist 'faith.'*

That is our hearty desire. Against the prison doors of these Christians many emotions

agent of Propaganda in Naples 1725–32; founded Order "for service of the poorest and most degraded souls" 1732; Bishop of St. Agatha 1762: resigned bishopric 1775 as poor as he came to it; canonised 1836. Works 16 vols. 8vo and 12mo, Paris, 1835; chief subjects the mystery of the Mass and the worship of the Virgin Mary. Life by Giatini, Rome, 1815; by Jeancard Cono, 1826. (Mainly from Wetzer and Welte.)]

are beating which have been implanted in them by the culture and civilisation of her peoples. They are visibly beginning to feel how intolerable it is that their Church is less and less in a condition to live among the living forces of history. The undeniable withering of the Catholic nations is forcing upon them the question whether the Church of Rome may not be responsible for it, seeing that in these millions of men of the richest natural endowment she carefully keeps down the beginnings of an independent moral life, so that they may die happy on her bosom. We would fain see the nations who are not willing to renounce a future in history preserved from this fate. But, if that is to be, there is nothing of such pressing necessity as a war against the Romanist conception of morals, which keeps down in men all that gives them a future—their independent conscience, their courage to prove themselves right, the energy which desires not merely to get through, but to effect something. But

the understanding of morals, which came into the world with the prophets of Israel and was brought to perfection in Jesus, has been encroached upon in many directions even within the circle of Protestant nations. If we wish to help our brothers in Roman Catholic bondage, we must overcome among ourselves this apostasy from the principles of the Reformation. But that will be achieved only if the Protestant Church resolutely separates itself from faith of the Catholic kind, which among us, too, is cherished, partly out of anxiety, partly out of indolence. We must get an insight into the fact that a determination to subject ourselves in matters of religion to the ideas of other people is not saving faith, but an act of that moral perversity from which God wants to save us. It must become thoroughly plain to us that the faith which saves a man is given him only when he seriously considers his own case for himself, and then, under the influence of those evidences of the living God which undoubtedly exist

for him in his own life, begins to be inwardly free and true. Whoever is following this road will find Jesus Christ too. For it is impossible that earnest men who simply seek along the lines of all that is strongest and kindliest in them for the truth in the midst of which they are set should in the long run fail to recognise that He is the truth. We may calmly await that issue in the case of all men who are, we trust, fighting the moral battle. God knows when their time will arrive. It is a violation of modest religious reserve to badger them with demands for faith with which they cannot yet comply. We ourselves should always in our actions, and as we have opportunity in our words as well, make known what and how we believe. But the forcing of others we should hate as we should the very devil.

§ 56. *Only thus can we lead the civilised nations to sincerity and progress.*

The future of the civilised nations depends, properly speaking, not on whether they get

free from Rome. But it does depend on whether they get free from what makes men untrue and so paralyses them morally. But nothing has so much to do with that as the fancy that we should be becoming religious and should be caring for our souls by adopting as our own the beliefs of other people. Religious tradition is indispensable for us. But it helps us only if it leads us on to listen to what God says to ourselves. Real faith consists in obeying this word of God. If, on the contrary, we favour the opinion that religious faith consists in the determination to pronounce true what for our own part we conceive not to be true, then we are responsible for the fact that among us, too, men become by means of their religion not humble, but proud ; not infinitely willing to serve, but ready for violence ; not truthful and free, but of Romanist morals. So, then, whoever among us would fain be a disciple of Jesus and is conscious of being in the line of succession of our Reformation forefathers, let him be

conscious also of his responsibility towards God and His people, and let him put away from him the Catholic kind of faith, which ultimately leaves every man to be engulfed in Roman Catholic morality.

Appendix

In a long appendix to the second German edition of the pamphlet on the Moral Law, Professor Herrmann, as he promised in the preface, deals faithfully with two Roman Catholic rejoinders[1] to his argument. In view, however, of the place the present volume has in a series meant to be of permanent interest, it has been decided in this reprint of the first English edition to present only a short summary of that appendix, and even then to pass lightly over controversial details. For, indeed, Professor Herrmann's main concern is always to bring the reader back to one or two leading

[1] *Catholic Ethics and Morality* ("Katholische Moral und Sittlichkeit"), by Dr Joseph Adloff, Strassburg, 1901; and *Catholic Ethics: Its Methods, Principles, and Problems* ("Die Kath. Moral: ihre Methoden, Grundsätze, und Aufgaben"), Joseph Mausbach, Cologne, 1902.

ideas that have been enunciated already, either in the body of this pamphlet, or in the earlier pamphlet forming the first portion of this volume. Where the actual words of the German are rendered in full, quotation marks are used; except in these passages, the reader must bear in mind that what is offered is an independent *résumé* of the author's thought.[1]

. . . . . .

The first point round which controversy or misunderstanding seems to converge is the dictum that faith is personal conviction. Adloff, one opponent, allows this, but immediately denies the interpretation of it that a man himself brings the ideas of doctrine into being in his own heart. That notion he regards as equivalent to the assertion that a man should reject all traditional facts or doctrines and proceed to construct a religion out of his own head. In the same way the author's other antagonist, Mausbach, stumbles at the sentence, "We should feel it to be a sin to treat as true,

[1] By Mr Stewart.

propositions the ideas of which are not our own ideas" (p. 103), and he boldly contrasts faith and knowledge, appealing to early, to mediæval, and to Reformation theologians in support of his contention that faith may be assent granted to facts or doctrines on the ground of external authority.[1]

With respect to the Reformers, the fact is that we now regard them as in this matter only partially enlightened. They did at times trust boldly to the guidance of the Spirit, but

[1] That there is a real stumbling-block here, even to those whom one cannot charge with incapacity to think clearly, is shown by the strange fact that the Rev. Alex. Smellie, in one of his beautiful meditations, *In the Secret Place,* on the texts "I know whom I have believed" and "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard Him ourselves"—a meditation in entire agreement with Professor Herrmann's position, and by an explicit reference acknowledging so—nevertheless begins the page by an objection to that position as being, in a short quotation from the earlier edition of the *Communion with God,* stated "too positively and uncompromisingly." The few words Mr Smellie quotes are amply balanced elsewhere in precisely the sense of Mr Smellie's own remarks, the treatment of the subject by Professor Herrmann both here and elsewhere aiming at a complete analysis in which compromise is unnecessary.

also they fell back upon the authority of the letter of Scripture as a substitute for the authority of the Church. Our only authority is our own experience of the God who works upon us through the realities amidst which we find ourselves, chief among which is the picture of the personal life revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures.

This reference to the Reformers is, however, apart from the immediate issue, which may be stated thus. Ideas are most certainly given us by outside means, as by tradition, by the Scriptures, by the Church, but we do not believe them in the sense of having faith in them until we have for ourselves understood them and appropriated them and made them our own personal convictions. The Roman Catholic position is that when a statement is offered for acceptance by the Church, the devout member is to accept it for that reason alone, and straightway add it to the sum of truths or facts he believes and would if need be die for. The answer might be that this is in-

tellectual suicide; but one may go further and say that it is a psychological impossibility, and that to profess to do so is essentially illogical and insincere (and all illogicality is insincere somewhere). A man may regard and ought to regard reverently and attentively ideas which are presented to his mind from any source that claims respect, especially such a source as religious tradition, or the Scriptures, or the Church: he should refrain from rashly denying or contradicting their truth, or from scoffing or mockery; it may even be right for him to impose on himself the sympathetic, earnest, deferential attitude that is described in the phrase 'the will to believe.' But he cannot actually believe them, he cannot be said to have faith in them, until their truth has become a matter of his own personal recognition and understanding and conviction. It is with this point that the first part of the present volume, the section on 'Faith,' has been concerned.

Professor Herrmann records, in passing to the theme treated on p. 190, the need for clear

teaching within the Protestant Church regarding the fundamental difference between the Catholic and the Protestant notion of what faith is. "The difference," he says, "between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant is not one of dogmas, but the whole idea of dogma is rejected by Protestantism." "The mind of a Christian is closed against dogma, so far as he is religiously alive." But many Protestants are still Catholics at heart in this matter. They embrace doctrines they do not understand, and bow before the authority of the Church or the creed or the letter of Scripture. There is a crying need to proclaim and teach within the Protestant Church that the one cause and ground of real faith is the personal conviction that the personality of Jesus produces in us. The Scriptural records are valuable as the vehicle by which the impression of this Personality is conveyed to us. When we recognise this we are freed from fear of historical criticism, and from bondage to the external authority of the letter.

The second controversial focus is the relation of religion and morality. The Catholic notion of faith as the acceptance of doctrines which are not personal convictions, and may not be understood, or even may really be rejected by the intellect, makes a divorce between religion and sincerity which cannot but affect moral practice, and in fact does bear its evil fruit in the Roman theories of Equivocation and Probabilism. Just as Catholic theology allows the acceptance of dogmas apart from any sincere personal conviction of their truth, so the casuist teachers allow a person to choose between various courses of action sanctioned by Church authorities, apart from any personal conviction of his own that the action decided upon is right. The theology propounds a scheme of doctrine, and asks the disciple to accept it, whether or not he is in real agreement with it. Similarly the teachers of the Church offer, as in Equivocation, sets of words which may have different senses, or, as in Probabilism, a variety of courses of action all permitted by weighty

leaders, and ask the disciple to take his choice, according to his pleasure and fancy, without feeling tied by any sense of personal responsibility.

It is easy to expose the horrors of this practice. It allows people to deceive by verbal quibbles or mental reservations, and still think themselves truthful. It allows people to do what in fact they feel to be wrong, and still think themselves blameless, because they can excuse themselves by appealing to some teacher of repute who permitted it. Any person possessing an elementary moral sense cannot but be shocked and disgusted by examples of Equivocation and Probabilism such as have been given. Here the point is to notice the essential relation of religion and morality. If personal conviction is made the supreme factor in faith, then personal responsibility and conscience will rule in morals ; but if private judgment is dispensed with in religion it will go in morals too, which means the negation of all morality. For a Protestant there is never free choice

between alternatives in a moral question. He is bound to use his judgment and conscience, and choose the highest course.

Special notice is given to the argument that the self-effacing acceptance of dogmas and commands given by the Church is like a child's belief in and obedience to its parents. The reply is that there a child consciously yields to the stronger higher personality of others. This is in itself an act of moral quality, and in doing so the child is being trained for independent judgment. The relation of a Catholic to his Church is different. "Mother Church" is not a real person but an ecclesiastical organisation, and is represented by officials whose characters do not necessarily or always give them any right to dominate his personality; and, further, he is not trained for independent judgment, but invited for all his life to renounce intellectual and spiritual independence.

And if the idea of surrender to the Church is pressed further as being equivalent to the child-like attitude towards God, the answer is

that, child-like and trustful as the right attitude to God must be, we can never for a moment regard God as wishing us to renounce our own independent moral vision, or disavow our own conscience, or distinguish between His holy will and what we ourselves perceive to be eternally right according to the moral law.

This reply to the defence of the Catholic attitude as child-like leads to the final stage of the controversy, in which it is shown that just as religious doctrines and ideas must become personal convictions before we can say we really believe them, so the moral law must be felt and regarded as coincident with our own will and conscience before our obedience to it has any moral worth. For we do not even perceive that the moral law is a moral and therefore universal law until we willingly and heartily accept it as binding upon ourselves, and thus identify it with our own will. A man "acts morally only in an act of free inward obedience: and such obedience can be rendered only to that which is perceived to tend towards

what he himself recognises as unconditionally binding." But the Roman Catholic shows the same misunderstanding here as in connection with the true notion of faith. Mausbach says, "The Catholic is fortunate enough not to be obliged to create all moral truths on his own account." But that is just what we should do. We have to create or recreate for ourselves the moral judgments and customs handed down to us by tradition, "making ever fresh applications of our own, of the principles underlying them." Each person has to train his own conscience. The Roman Church would let him lazily rest on regulations and decisions made by his Church or his father-confessor. We certainly do not undervalue good counsel and advice, but it may be so given as to stimulate a man's own judgment. The Roman Church, on the contrary, supplies ready-made lists of duties and good works, and says that their performance constitutes goodness, whereas "it is the will alone that is morally good."

Rome "fails to understand that what is

moral is, in essence, what is unconditionally binding, freely recognised, and therefore really willed." It conceives the moral requirement of God as an invasion of our freedom. The true view is that the intelligent will makes practical use of its freedom by seeking, recognising, obeying the call of duty, but Rome conceives duty "not as a creation of the free will but as a limitation of it." "How deeply this legalist perversion of the notion of morality has eaten its way in, is shown by the Probabilist principle that our own will does not need to take the direction in which our own discernment points us, if we find that decisions clothed with ecclesiastical authority permit the contrary."

"The inward truth of moral ideas means that they carry in themselves their right to pass current, and do not receive it through a connection with anything else. A man recognises them as being what they really are when he recognises them as the foundation of all life that is destined for independence or personality.

On the other hand, he completely loses sight of them if he tries to conceive them as themselves in their turn dependent on some other entity which has become otherwise known to him. He who does not apprehend goodness as an idea independent of all others does not conceive of it at all. Therefore it is possible to establish the reality of the moral ideas only by expounding their content and explaining what they do for the lifting up of man's life into the independence that belongs to personality. . . . Between the moral will and goodness itself no other power ought to intervene in order to bestow upon goodness, as something additional, the force by which it lays the will under obligation. A law which needed such an addition would not be the expression of goodness. If we have come to see that, we have also laid hold of the thought that the moral will gives itself its own law by means of its own perception of what is unconditionally necessary—or, in other words, the moral will is autonomous."

This is, of course, Kantian doctrine. It

does not mean that a person requires no instruction, as if everyone could "make up" a perfect law out of his own head from his own experience. What it does mean is that, while all education and instruction is useful and full of guidance, the aim must always be to lead the person up to that point of perfect insight from which he freely with his own will recognises and ratifies and adopts the universal moral law as his own private desire too, and identifies his own will with it. Nor is God thus displaced from a position as the source of the moral law, for in all this no theory is stated as to the ultimate origin of the fact of the moral law or of human personality and its capacities. Indeed, it is the only view that maintains as the moral ideal free and perfect agreement—that is, fellowship—between man and God, the human will and the Divine. This whole argument is implicit too in Jesus' question, "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" Notice also that "*all the requirements uttered in the fifth chapter of*

Matthew can be fulfilled only by one who imposes them upon himself. This is true above all of the love of our neighbour as Jesus expounds it."

In conclusion, Professor Herrmann maintains that there is a relation of cause and effect between the deadening of personal initiative in faith and morals and the backward economic and political life of the Roman Catholic nations.

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